


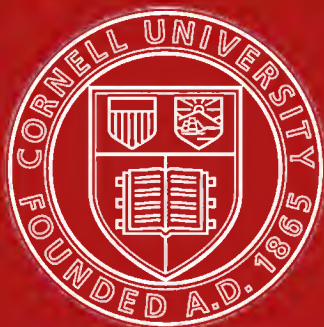


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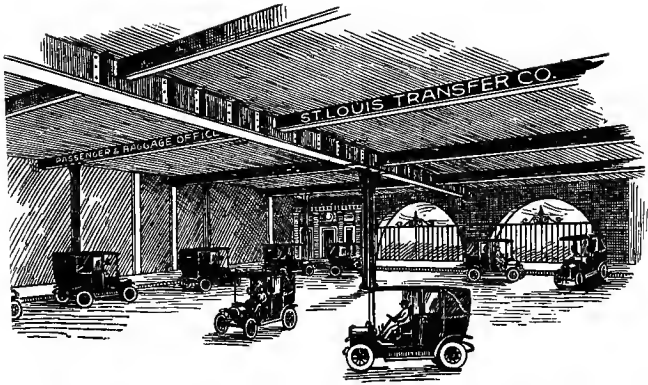




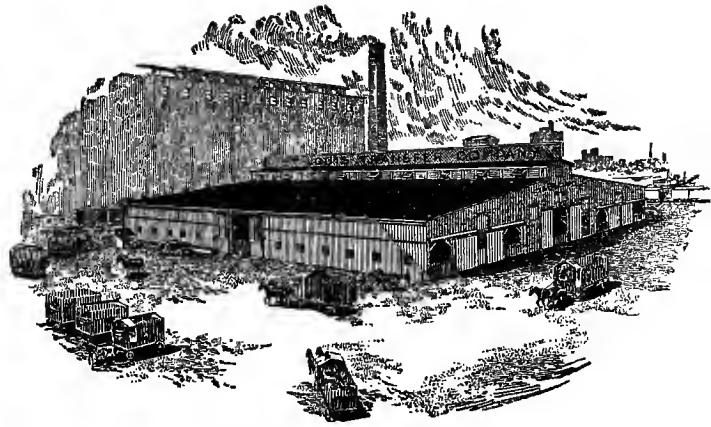
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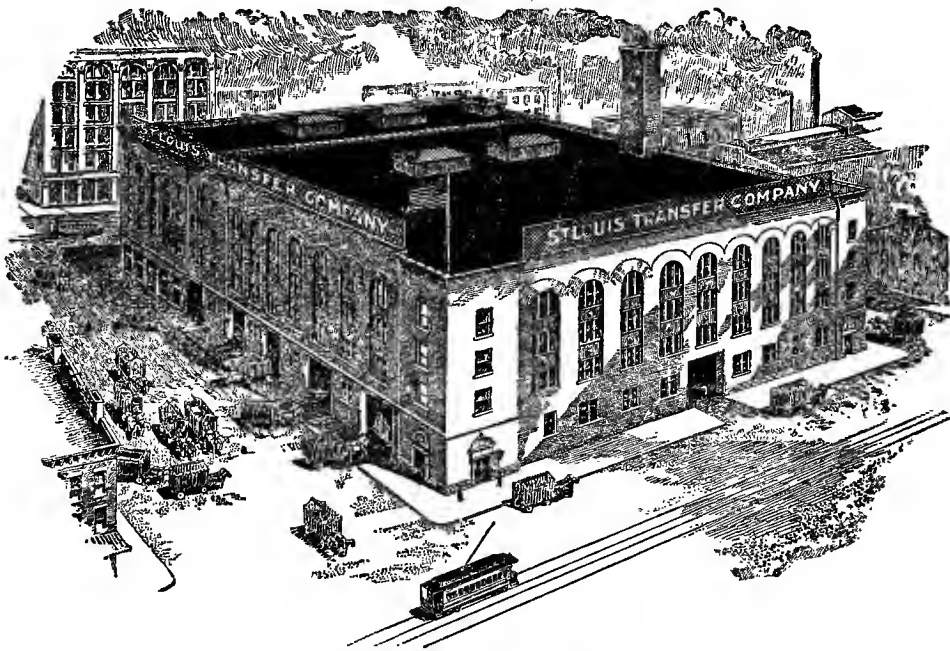
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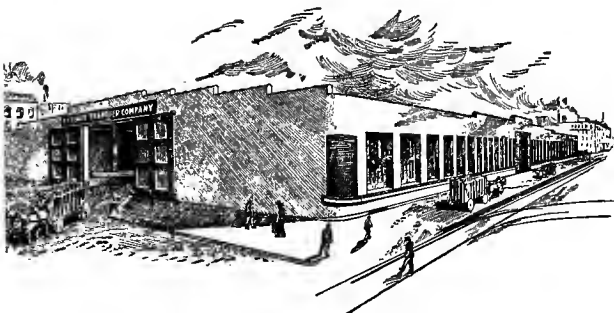
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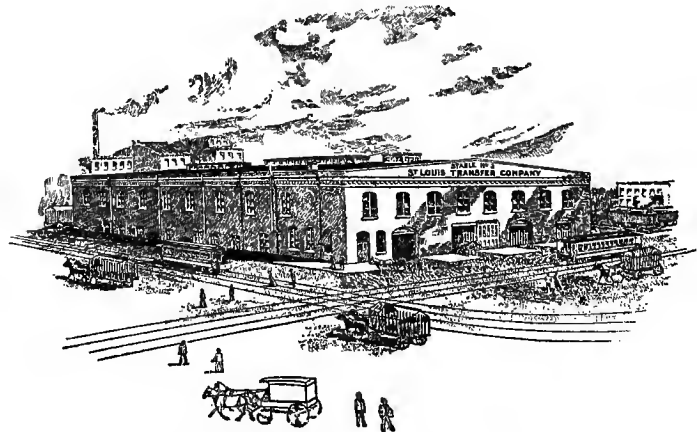
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## THE BROWN-REYNOLDS DUEL











# THE BROWN-REYNOLDS DUEL

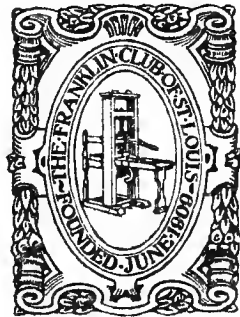
A COMPLETE DOCUMENTARY CHRONICLE  
OF THE LAST BLOODSHED UNDER THE  
CODE BETWEEN ST. LOUISANS

---

FROM THE MANUSCRIPT COLLECTION OF  
WILLIAM K. BIXBY

---

EDITED WITH AN EXPLANATORY NARRATIVE  
BY  
WALTER B. STEVENS



THE FRANKLIN CLUB OF ST. LOUIS  
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THE FRANKLIN CLUB OF ST. LOUIS

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The Committee on Publication of The Franklin Club of St. Louis certifies that one hundred and fifty copies of "The Brown-Reynolds Duel" have been printed for members of the club.



## THE FRANKLIN CLUB OF ST. LOUIS

To print books, as far as possible from materials hitherto unpublished and especially relating to the Mississippi Valley, is the primary motive of this Club. It was avowed in the invitation which, issued in June, 1909, resulted promptly in an organization of more than one hundred members. As was anticipated, the time proved to be ripe for a book club in St. Louis. A gratifying degree of interest was manifested not only in the purpose to enrich our local history, but in the production of books representative of the printers' craft in its perfection.

While the Committee on Publication sought from a wealth of materials the subject for the initial product, the Club carried through a series of exhibitions which were received with no ordinary interest by lovers of books. The first of these was the exhibit of book bindings. Then followed portraits and manuscripts of Washington, books issued by American book clubs, books issued by the private presses of England, books privately printed and early printed books. These six exhibitions were opened for Club members only, but were continued several days following for the public.

In asking for incorporation The Franklin Club stated the objects to be "the study and promotion of the various arts pertaining to the production of books, including the occasional publication, but not for profit, of books illustrating these arts, and for the purposes of literary discussion."

The purpose has been carried out in the several exhibitions and meetings which have been held. It now finds further expression in the first book of The Franklin Club. An embarrassment of riches in manuscript collections exists in St. Louis. Not only is there available for the work of the Club a mass of local historical data, but this city is the repository of many unpublished collections of more than national interest. The Committee deemed it proper to confine the selection for the first book to local history. In documentary chronicle and in illuminative narrative by an arrangement unique, is presented "The Brown-Reynolds Duel."

F. W. Lehmann

President



## THE FRANKLIN CLUB'S FIRST BOOK.

The last duel, in which blood was shed, between St. Louisans, was a glimmer, on the horizon, of the coming war storm. In St. Louis, from 1850 to 1860, was developing rapidly the crisis. The Brown-Reynolds duel was of that political evolution which was to become revolution. Its literature has significance far beyond relation to individuals. The first book of The Franklin Club is a contribution, vivid and tragic, to American history.

B. Gratz Brown was the editor of the *Missouri Democrat*. Thomas C. Reynolds was United States District Attorney. In 1854, an editorial by Brown provoked a demand for explanation from Reynolds. Three times in three years the editor and the attorney were involved in sharp controversy about newspaper articles. Twice the challenge passed. In 1856 the duel was fought.

There was much correspondence. Men of prominence in the community were drawn into the successive affairs, to act either as seconds or advisers. Precedents on the field of honor were cited. Practice under the code was discussed.

The editorials, the requests for retractions, the challenges, the agreements to govern on the field, even the press reports and comments were preserved. Arranged in their sequence, these manuscripts and clippings make a complete and dramatic chronicle of duelling. They afford an intimate revelation of that mental operation by which men of high education, of refinement, of gentlemanly instincts were prompted to face each other deliberately and without anger in hostile meeting.

Several years after the deaths of the principals to this duel, the original papers came into the possession of William K. Bixby. They included not only the letters which passed, but first drafts from which revised copies were written. Through the courtesy of Mr. Bixby the entire collection of manuscripts and clippings was available for this book.

The completeness of the documentary chronicle suggested an unusual if not an unprecedented treatment. No explanatory matter has been inserted. No footnotes have been added. No reference numbers have been employed. But the papers and the clippings, in their order, with guiding captions, occupy the left-hand pages, in italic type. Upon the right-hand pages, in Roman type, is the explanatory narrative. It describes political bearings. It sketches personalities. It traces relationships of the Brown-Reynolds duel to preceding St. Louis duels. In brief, the narrative is a series of side-lights, given proper juxtaposition so far as practicable, to illuminate the opposite pages of the documentary chronicle.

W. B. S.



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## THE FIRST CONTROVERSY

[1854]

*Editorial Criticism, Demand for Explanation,  
Selection of Seconds, Withdrawal of Personalities.*

## THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY CRITICISED

[Editorial in the *Missouri Democrat*, Friday morning, April 21st, 1854]

## PUT A BEGGAR ON HORSEBACK AND HE WILL RIDE TO THE DEVIL

Old Proverb

*The reason why he will do so is because he never expects to get another ride and wishes to prolong the one conferred upon him as long as possible.*

*The facts connected with the disturbances in MacDonald County and the famous hegira of the United States Marshal into Arkansas, are already known to the public and it is unnecessary now to repeat them. As the grand jury, too, has at length hatched out the egg placed under it for incubation, we feel at liberty to comment freely upon the matter and to give our views on some points which strike us as being of more than passing notice. . . . What we object to most seriously is that action upon the part of the United States Marshal and United States District Attorney which has resulted in raking up from oblivion obsolete statutes of the civil and criminal law, and of causing great disquietude and annoyance to a large number of the most respectable citizens of Southwest Missouri. . . . The instigators of it may perhaps feather their nests with \$20 docket fees in each case and extensive mileage accounts against the treasury, but that it will result in benefit to the government, we do not believe. . . . Under such a construction as is now affected by the District Attorney and the United States Marshal, all the citizens of Utah, of Oregon, of California and of Nebraska, might be arrested and dragged before the United States Court for "cutting timber," and if they resisted such an odious proceeding, might be indicted for "high treason." . . .*

*The whole difficulty in these prosecutions, or rather in the incipient steps which brought them about, arises from the appointment of persons to office upon the recommendation of a few nullifiers at Washington and in opposition to the wishes of four-fifths of the people of the State. The present appointees owe their places to the misrepresentations of Atchison and Phelps, who have been laboring all along in cahoot to defeat the interests of Missouri, and, of course, nothing better could be expected of such proteges. They belong, too, to the small class of hermaphrodite politicians, who, here in Missouri, style themselves anties, and who, in their blind opposition to Benton, are even willing to go to the length of subverting by the revival of obsolete laws, all he has done for thirty years past to guard the rights of the settler and to secure him his domicile free from intrusion.*

*In the remarks we have made upon this subject, we have endeavored to avoid the use of personalities towards the individuals who now occupy the marshalship*

## THE EXPLANATORY NARRATIVE

Thomas C. Reynolds was of South Carolina nativity. He was born in Charleston, October 11th, 1821. B. Gratz Brown was a Kentuckian, the grandson of the first United States Senator from the Blue Grass State. He was born at Lexington, May 28th, 1826. While he was a boy, Reynolds was taken by his parents to live in Virginia. Graduating at the University of Virginia in 1842, Reynolds went to Germany and studied at Heidelberg. He came back to Virginia and was admitted to the bar in 1844. Brown having graduated from Transylvania University at Lexington in 1845, went to Yale and studied two years. He came to St. Louis in 1849, entered the law office of his relative, Francis P. Blair, Jr., but devoted much time to writing editorials for the newspapers. Reynolds entered the diplomatic service as secretary of legation at Madrid in 1846. He came to St. Louis in 1850 and began the practice of law, with increasing attention to local politics. In 1853 Reynolds' political zeal was recognized in the appointment of United States district attorney. In 1854 Brown's facility with the pen justified the appearance of his name at the head of the editorial page of the *Missouri Democrat*.

Personalities of the Principals

These young men came to St. Louis at about the same time. Both were highly educated. Both attained quickly prominence in the community. Both were Democrats—but Democrats of factions between which the hostility was intense. Brown was a Free Soil Democrat. Reynolds was a Pro-slavery Democrat. Reynolds, within five years after his coming, won a position of influence in local political councils so marked that he was made the candidate of his faction for Congress in 1856, not with any expectation of election, but to swell the Anti-Benton vote. Brown in the same time had written himself into such distinction that it was said his editorials in the *Democrat* were "cursed by Pro-slavery men, commended by Free Soilers, and read by all."

The beginning of the first controversy appeared in the *Missouri Democrat* of the 21st of April, 1854. It was an editorial of considerable length, arraighing the United States marshal and the United States district attorney for persecuting settlers in the Ozarks on charges of "timber cutting." In reply to the editorial Reynolds wrote a letter, which the *Democrat* printed. He claimed that his course in the timber cutting cases had been misjudged. On the same page with the district attorney's card was a second editorial, much more severe in criticism than the first. It recalled a diplomatic scandal, which had occurred when Reynolds was Secretary of Legation at Madrid and inferentially connected him with it. This brought from the district attorney a note which, after the manner of the code, was conveyed to the editors of the *Democrat* by a "friend" of the writer.

Brown's Opening Attack

The first and second editorials and the first letter or "card from the district

*and the attorneyship of Missouri, while at the same time we have not scrupled to characterize their official conduct and political antecedents in such terms as they richly deserve. In conclusion, we may add that if this course of persecution against many of our citizens be continued in the future, we shall have occasion to renew this commentary and may perhaps be able to throw additional light upon some parts of the preliminary proceedings which inaugurate high treason in Missouri.*

### A CARD FROM THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY

[Published on the Editorial Page of the Democrat, April 24th, 1854]

ST. LOUIS, Mo., April 21st, 1854

*To the Editors of the Missouri Democrat:*

*Gentlemen:*

*An article in your paper of this morning, which, though published as an editorial, my respect for the professional ability of the two lawyers who edit the Democrat, forbids my believing was penned by either of them, demands a notice at my hands. . . .*

*Endeavoring in the exercise of my office to look only to considerations of duty, and conscious that I do so, I must decline to notice those portions of the article in your paper which contain allusions to politics; as I feel that this community will agree with me in thinking that the possible effect particular proceedings of courts may have on disputed political questions should never be considered by the officers of the law; and also that imputations of political motives for their actions should never be lightly made by others or inconsiderately noticed by them, except when made by official superiors. Whether I shall at any time take notice of the remainder of that article or of any subsequent publications on the subject will therefore depend on their nature, and my opinion of the source from which they emanate. I will, however, suggest to its authors that before they again comment on my official actions, it would be well for them to inquire into the facts of the case, which they cannot know for the plain reason that my official correspondence has not yet been disclosed to them, though I have never hesitated and will not hesitate to explain my course to any person inquiring into it in a proper spirit. . . .*

*Reciprocating the desire of the writers of that article to "avoid personalities," and trusting that I have done so in this communication, I seize, Messrs. Editors, this occasion to assure you of the high respect with which I have the honor to be*

*Very truly yours,*

*Thomas C. Reynolds.*

THE EXPLANATORY NARRATIVE

attorney" were not preserved in either of the two collections of manuscripts and clippings now possessed by Mr. Bixby. Possibly neither of the two men who were to be principals in the three controversies considered the beginning a serious matter. But with the sending of the note by "my friend, Mr. Goode," Reynolds preserved, not only every letter that passed, but every scrap of writing and every newspaper publication which related to the controversies. When he, or one of his seconds, sent a letter, Reynolds kept either the first draft or a copy. The printed matter he clipped and credited with the name of the paper and the date of publication.

Nothing in the first editorial could be construed as showing personal animus toward Reynolds. The Pierce administration at Washington had given the official patronage of Missouri to the Anti-Benton leaders. The district attorney and the marshal were two of the appointees credited to Senator David R. Atchison. Condemnation of the conduct of these officials was adverse criticism of the Pierce administration. The *Missouri Democrat* was making much of settlers' rights. That had long been a Benton doctrine. The evolution from it was the "squatter sovereignty" of Douglas, but Benton did not follow it to that development. The editors of the *Democrat* were carrying out a policy to which the paper was thoroughly committed in taking up the cause of the settlers. Some of these settlers had shown resistance when the marshal tried to serve warrants on them for cutting timber on government land. They had been charged with high treason against the United States under an old statute. They were being prosecuted in United States courts far from their homes. The cases gave the *Missouri Democrat* excellent opportunity and the use made of it for political capital is shown by the editorial.

The  
Politics  
in it

The first and second editorials and the first letter of Reynolds, as given on the left-hand pages, beginning the first controversy, were copied from the files of the *Missouri Democrat*, in the possession of its successor, the *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*. Several paragraphs of general political character in the editorials, not bearing upon the controversy between the editor and the district attorney, are omitted.

Reynolds' first letter to the *Missouri Democrat* contained a single sentence which suggested the possibility of an appeal to the code. Having disposed of his specific purpose in addressing the paper, he added: "Whether I shall at any time take notice of the remainder of the article or of any subsequent publications on the subject will therefore depend upon their nature and my opinion of the source from which they emanate." This was warning that newspaper criticism of the district attorney might lead to a challenge. It meant the "field of honor." While political leaders were developing and shaping the great issue of slavery, voters in St. Louis and throughout Missouri

## THE SECOND AND STRONGER EDITORIAL

[Answer to the District Attorney's card published on the same page of the Democrat,  
Monday morning, April 24th, 1854.]

*In another column will be found a communication from the U. S. District Attorney, replying to an editorial in our Friday's paper. It is written in a tone, and contains untruthful assumptions that might well justify us in declining its publication, but as this grave matter of citing whole counties of our State before the criminal bar is one worthy of an immediate hearing, we are willing to waive etiquette and grant him whatever advantage may be derived from transcending the bounds of decorous response.*

*The District Attorney assumes for reasons best known to himself, that the article which appeared in the Democrat was a contribution from some one disconnected with the paper. This is a point on which he could easily have satisfied himself had he applied for information, and which it would have been well for one who plumes himself upon his accuracy to have verified before asserting. To satisfy his curiosity, we can inform him that the article was written by one of the editors of the Democrat. We do not follow the example of the late grand jury and make presentments that are "reduced to writing" by others. . . .*

*The District Attorney also takes good care to let all know that these proceedings of the grand jury were reduced to writing by himself. As he says, however, that they were originated by him and reduced to writing by him, and as he reaps the fees besides, we are left utterly at a loss to know what the grand jury did do, unless it was to get up a sarsaparilla advertisement in his behalf. If it were a pertinent question we might feel inclined to ask whether he reduced that to writing also.*

*He moreover takes us to task for speaking of his official actions when we "cannot know" the facts, as he has not yet published his official correspondence. This is really a singular conclusion, for everybody does know that the facts contained in official correspondence very often come to light without being published, and no one should know that better than the District Attorney himself, who was once Secretary of the American Legation in Spain. We remember that during Mr. Polk's administration, the very important fact of an offer to purchase Cuba by the American minister was made known to the public through the New York Herald, although the correspondence was not only "not published," but was intended to be a State secret. As the District Attorney was Secretary of Legation at that time and to that court, perhaps he can inform the public how the fact came to be known. Painful rumors were abroad through the country in regard to the manner in which the Herald obtained its information, but our memory does not retain all the particulars, and we therefore wait enlightenment from the District Attorney. . . .*

THE EXPLANATORY NARRATIVE

were groping and floundering. Party lines were down. Party organization was in confusion. The citizen of St. Louis had his choice of being a Benton Democrat or a "regular" Democrat, a Whig or a Native American, a Reform Republican, an Emancipationist, an Abolitionist, a Free Soiler. Not infrequently he changed his party affiliation from one election to another. Benton was beaten for the Senate, elected to the House and defeated for Governor, all in six years. St. Louis had in rapid succession a Democrat, a Whig, an Emancipationist and a Republican for mayors.

From 1850 to 1860 was a decade of party chaos for the city. The young editor, guided by a dimly defined political policy, realizing under-the-surface rumblings of a political earthquake, endeavored to make his editorial page virile and readable; he did not shun personalities in dealing with the opposition elements.

Brown's  
Editorial  
Policy

All of the preceding winter of 1854 the conflict over slavery in the territories had raged in Congress. Stephen A. Douglas had secured in the legislation providing for the organization of the territories of Nebraska and Kansas the recognition of his squatter sovereignty. This superseded the Missouri Compromise to which Benton had clung so tenaciously. It left the people organizing a territory "free to form and regulate their domestic institutions in their own way, subject only to the Constitution of the United States." Slavery was an "institution." It was frequently called, in those days, "the peculiar institution." This squatter sovereignty legislation was well on its stormy way through Congress at the time the first controversy between Brown and Reynolds started. The bill became law on the last day of May, 1854. The Anti-Benton Democrats were fearful that Kansas and Nebraska might vote to exclude slavery when they organized, leaving Missouri a slave State, surrounded on three sides by free soil. In his editorial writing that winter and spring Brown upheld with all the power of his pen free soilism. The bitterness between the Benton and the Anti-Benton wings grew.

Lincoln  
and the  
Democrat

The men who supported, edited and published the *Missouri Democrat* were called "Bentonites." They preferred to be known as the "Free Democratic party." They were against the extension of slavery. They went farther than that in their minds, if not in the paper. They were groping for some practicable plan which might in time wipe out slavery. The *Missouri Democrat*, in 1853-4, occupied the position on slavery which Abraham Lincoln did. There developed an intimate relationship between the Springfield lawyer and this new St. Louis newspaper. This relationship continued and strengthened through the campaigns of 1856, 1858 and 1860. Blair and Brown contributed editorials for some months after the paper was started, although the name of neither appeared as editor. Benton wrote for the

## I

## REYNOLDS NAMES HIS "FRIEND"

ST. LOUIS, MO., 24th April, 1854

*To the Editors of the Democrat:**Gentlemen:*

*In your editorial of Friday last, concerning myself, you stated that you "endeavored to avoid the use of personalities." A similar statement does not accompany your editorial this morning on the same topics, and I deem it my duty to inquire whether this latter editorial was intended in the same spirit, or designed to be personally offensive?*

*My friend, Mr. Goode, will receive your reply.*

*I am, gentlemen,*

*Very respectfully,*

*Your obedient servant,*

*Thomas C. Reynolds.*

## II

## BROWN ACKNOWLEDGES AUTHORSHIP

ST. LOUIS, April 24th, 1854

*Thos. C. Reynolds, Esq.**Sir:*

*Your note of this date has been received from the hands of Mr. Geo. W. Goode.*

*It is proper that I should respond to your communication, which is addressed to the editors of the Democrat, as I am the author of the articles to which you allude.*

*The omission to make the statement in the article to which you call my attention, arose from the fact that the opening paragraph of your communication addressed to the editors of the Democrat, and intended*

THE EXPLANATORY NARRATIVE

editorial page. He made it a rule to see his matter in proof and the slips were carried to his house by Daniel M. Houser, a young clerk in the business office.

For nearly two years the *Democrat* carried the names of Hill and McKee as publishers and W. S. McKee as editor. In 1854 occurred changes out of which developed the controversies leading to the Brown-Reynolds duel. Hill retired from the publication. The names of W. S. McKee and B. Gratz Brown appeared as editors. W. S. McKee was a cousin of William McKee. He died before the year was out. B. Gratz Brown became alone the responsible editor.

Quite naturally the district attorney turned to George W. Goode when he needed a friend in an affair of honor. Goode was a Virginian. Reynolds' He had had experience with the code. Before coming to St. Louis Well- George W. Goode lived in Richmond. He was associated in law Chosen practice with Hon. James A. Seddon, who at a much later date "Friend" was secretary of war in the cabinet of Jefferson Davis. A close personal friend of Goode received an insult which called for a duel, but religious scruples, possibly church relations, forbade the sending of a challenge. Goode made his friend's grievance his own and sent the challenge. This action disqualified him under the constitution of Virginia in such a manner that he felt it advisable to move away. Settling in St. Louis, Goode developed marked ability in land litigation. He was counsel in one famous case which yielded him a fee of \$60,000. He purchased an estate in St. Louis County and lived the life of a country gentleman.

Seven years, beginning in 1849, the contest between Benton and Anti-Benton elements went on. About the beginning of it one of the Anti-Benton newspapers in St. Louis said the senator would "be shaken off as the dew is shaken from the lion's mane." (sic.)

The Days  
of Passion  
in Politics

When Benton was asked what he thought the outcome would be, he replied, "I shall tread them down as an elephant treads pismires under his feet."

In the course of one of his speeches, Benton leaned forward and, pointing to a man in the audience said, "That man has no heart. He has nothing but gizzard and he has lied on Benton from the bottom of his gizzard to the tip of his tongue."

Meigs, the biographer of Benton, says of the period to which the Brown-Reynolds controversies belong, "that these were years of unexampled passion in the politics of Missouri and that personalities of the grossest character were freely indulged in on both sides."

David H. Armstrong, who counseled Reynolds, was the postmaster. Benton showed his feeling toward Armstrong by ordering that no mail matter be forwarded him through the St. Louis office when he was in the city. He

*for publication, contained an assumption which I conceived reflected upon myself personally. Viewing it in this light, it became necessary in repelling such an imputation, to use language inconsistent with the spirit which had characterized the first article.*

*I remain, sir,*

*Very respectfully,*

*Your obedient servant,*

*B. Gratz Brown.*

[Received, this the 25th April, 1854, at  
half past 12 p. m.—G. W. Goode.]

### III

#### "PERSONALITIES" DISAVOWED BY REYNOLDS

ST. LOUIS, Mo., April 25th, 1854

*B. Gratz Brown, Esq.*

*Sir:*

*In reply to your note of yesterday, just received, I have no hesitation in saying that your impression, therein stated, with regard to the opening paragraph of my communication of the 21st, is wholly erroneous, as you will, I think, perceive on a careful re-perusal. Appreciating your assurance in your first editorial of a wish to "avoid personalities," I distinctly stated my purpose to do likewise, and in the concluding paragraph of my communication, expressed the hope that I had done so.*

*I have now to say I had no intention in any part of that communication, to reflect, in any way, on either of the editors of the Democrat, whom, it will be observed in the conclusion thereof, I assured of my "high respect."*

*I remain, sir,*

*Very respectfully,*

*Your obedient servant,*

*Thomas C. Reynolds.*

[Handed to Mr. Brown, 10 a. m.,  
26th April, by G. W. Goode.]

THE EXPLANATORY NARRATIVE

had his correspondence addressed elsewhere and sent his outgoing letters to another office to be mailed.

John M. Krum, another of the Anti-Benton Democrats, who was in the councils of Reynolds' friends, had been mayor of Alton and later mayor of St. Louis. That he had attained much influence and prominence in that wing of the Democratic party was evident from the personal attention he received at the voice of "Old Bullion." But Benton did not mention Krum by name in his speeches. He referred to him as "the man whose patronymic signifies the smallest particle of bread."

In view of such utterances by Benton, the leader, on the stump, the personal references with which Brown, the editor, enlivened his editorials do not seem extraordinary. Reynolds manifested no strong disposition to push the first controversy to a duel, after he had discovered the authorship of the objectionable editorials. He was the first to disavow the personal phase. In his letter of the 25th he said he "had no intention to reflect on either of the editors of the *Democrat*." This gave the writer of the editorials the opportunity, without backing down, "to withdraw any language that is personally offensive." And thus the controversy was brought to its conclusion with expressions of satisfaction.

It will be observed, however, that beginning with the letter of Brown on the 24th of April, Reynolds and his "friend" noted at the bottom of the page the hour of the day when each communication was delivered or received. This was in accordance with the established practice under the code duello. Reynolds was preparing for a different termination of the controversy if Brown did not meet him at least half way to an amicable adjustment.

An interesting possibility is that Reynolds, in starting this controversy, suspected Benton might be the author of the editorial. He knew, Did as did everybody in St. Louis politics, that Benton was a frequent Reynolds contributor to the editorial page of the *Democrat*. To the young Suspect district attorney, with his South Carolina ideas of personal respon- Benton? sibility, an issue like this with the great Benton would be very attractive. In his "card" Reynolds intimated his theory that the first editorial had not been written by either of the editors of the *Democrat*. He said his future course would depend upon his "opinion of the source" from which these editorial criticisms emanated.

The paragraph in the second editorial, referring to the diplomatic scandal and Reynolds' possible connection with it, was of a character to intensify his resentment toward the *Democrat*. It indicated that the district attorney's record, before he came to St. Louis, had been a subject of investigation by somebody at Washington. But Reynolds chose to ignore the intimation that while Secretary of Legation at Madrid he had betrayed an official trust.

## IV

## "OFFENSIVE" LANGUAGE WITHDRAWN BY BROWN

ST. LOUIS, Apl 26th, 1854

*Thos. C. Reynolds, Esqr**Sir:**Your note dated the 25th instant has just been received from the hands of Mr. Geo. W. Goode.**Your disclaimer of a design to cast any imputation upon myself or the editors of the Democrat in your published communication, gives me an opportunity, of which I take pleasure in availing myself, to withdraw any language that is personally offensive to you in the editorial article of the Democrat of Monday, the 24th inst.**This note will be delivered to you by my friend, Col. Robert M. Renick.**I remain, sir,**Very respectfully,**Your ob't servant,**B. Gratz Brown.*

[Recd 12 M., 26th April, '54.]

## V

## THE OUTCOME "SATISFACTORY"

ST. LOUIS, Mo., 26 April, 1854

*B. Gratz Brown, Esqr**Sir:**Your note of to-day is received and it gives me pleasure to accept the same as satisfactory.**I remain, sir,**Very respectfully,**Your ob't servant,**Thomas C. Reynolds.*

Thos C Reynolds Esq  
Sir

St Louis Apr 26<sup>th</sup>  
1854.

Your note dated the  
25<sup>th</sup> instant has just been received from the hands  
of Mr Geo W Goode

Your disclaimer of a design to cast any  
imputation upon myself or the Editors of the Democrat  
in your published communication gives me an  
opportunity, of which I take pleasure in availing  
myself, to withdraw any language that is personally  
offensive to you in the editorial article of the  
Democrat of Monday the 24<sup>th</sup> inst.

This note will be delivered to you by  
my friend Col Robert M Plunk

I remain Sir

Very Respectfully  
Your Obedt Servant  
Phaty Brown

Recd 12 M. 26<sup>th</sup> April 54



St Louis Mo. 26 April 1854

B. Gratz Brown Esq  
Sir:

Your note of today is received  
and it gives me pleasure to accept  
<sup>the same</sup> as satisfactory; ~~your withdrawal therein~~  
~~stated.~~

I remain, Sir,

Very Respectfully

Your obt servant

Thomas C Reynolds



THE EXPLANATORY NARRATIVE

Nowhere in the correspondence did he make any reference to this serious reflection upon his honor. The prompt avowal of Brown that "I am the author of the articles to which you allude" established personal responsibility. It put a check on any theory Reynolds may have entertained that Benton could be drawn into the controversy, though it may not have met the suspicion in his mind. The change of tone from the district attorney's note of the 24th to that of the 25th was marked. Reynolds, at that time, was seeking no quarrel with Brown.

The second and stronger editorial contained the phrase, "a sarsaparilla advertisement." Benton had made some time before what had become famous as his "sarsaparilla speech." His purpose was to kill with sarcasm Henry Clay's compromise of 1850 for the political ills of the country. Advertisements of the wonderful virtues of a sarsaparilla compound were read to the Senate by Benton and applied to the Clay proposition so effectively that the expression "a sarsaparilla advertisement" conveyed to the public mind the idea of a ridiculous humbug. The *Democrat's* editorial suggested that the grand jury's complimentary report on the work of the district attorney might have been written by Reynolds himself, in which case it would be classed as "a sarsaparilla advertisement."

A Sarsaparilla  
Adver-  
tisement

Reynolds ignored the "sarsaparilla" reference, as he did the diplomatic scandal. His readiness to drop the controversy is shown further in the change he made from the original draft of his letter expressing satisfaction. He wrote first: "Your note of to-day is received and it gives me pleasure to accept as satisfactory your withdrawal therein stated."

Upon consideration Reynolds revised the draft by writing "the same" before "satisfactory" and running a line through the words following, so that the note read: "Your note of to-day is received and it gives me pleasure to accept the same as satisfactory."

The intimate relationship of Benton, the *Democrat* and Brown was illustrated in the State campaign of that same year, 1854. The *Missouri Democrat* carried a ticket under the caption of "Democratic Nominations." The top of the ticket was "For Congress, Thomas H. Benton."

The *Daily Evening Pilot*, "five cents a week, payable to the carrier," displayed at the top of the editorial page, "Democratic ticket, for Congress, Trusten Polk of St. Louis."

The  
Campaign  
of 1854

The *Intelligencer* headed its ticket "Nominations by the Whig Convention." The first nomination was, "For Congress, Luther M. Kennett."

The election was the 11th of August. The returns gave Kennett, 6,251; Benton, 5,394; Polk, 370. Benton was beaten. But upon the local ticket with Benton were D. M. Frost for State Senator; Francis P. Blair, Jr., and B. Gratz Brown, for Representatives. They were avowed supporters of Benton

## VI

## THE "FRIENDS" CONSIDER PUBLICITY

ST. LOUIS, Mo., April 26th, 1854

*Dear Sir:*

*Enclosed is a note from Mr. Brown and below you have the form of a paragraph, the publication of which in the Democrat would, it occurs to me, supersede the necessity of making publick the correspondence between Messrs. Reynolds and Brown. I have drawn it with strict regard to an impartial disclosure of the facts of the case; and I can but hope that it will meet the approbation of yourself and Mr. Brown.*

*You will of course not understand me as presuming to dictate anything. I merely suggest the following:*

## CARD

*In consequence of our editorial of Monday last concerning Mr. Thomas C. Reynolds, U. S. Attorney, a correspondence was commenced by Mr. Reynolds in regard thereto, which has resulted in our being satisfied that we were under a misapprehension as to the tone and design of Mr. Reynolds' published communication in our paper of that date. It therefore gives us pleasure to withdraw all language in said editorial which is personally offensive to Mr. Reynolds.*

*It seems to me that the foregoing is a fair and unexceptionable expose and will have the effect of placing the parties properly before the publick, and this without unnecessary prolixity.*

*Hoping for your concurrence in the above, I remain, in haste,*

*Very truly,*

*Your friend, etc.,*

*G. W. Goode.*

[Endorsed: "Delivered by me to  
Col. Renick same day—T. C. R."]

THE EXPLANATORY NARRATIVE

for United States Senator and voted for him at the session of the Legislature the following January.

The code was passing at St. Louis. Possibly that may explain the mildness which characterized the first controversy of Brown and Reynolds. There had been no duel between citizens of St. Louis for several years. The most recent affair was that of Francis P. Blair, Jr., and Lorenzo Pickering, about 1849. Pickering was conducting the *Union*. He assailed Blair so savagely that the latter, although opposed to the code, sent a challenge. Blair's "friend" in the transaction was Thomas T. Gantt, afterwards judge of the Court of Appeals. In his acceptance Pickering exercised the right of the challenged to name the time and place; he did it in such a manner as to make the duel impossible. His stipulation was that the meeting must take place at Fourth and Pine Streets; that the hour must be twelve o'clock, noon. Blair "posted" Pickering. That is to say, he denounced him as a coward. A few days later the men met on Chestnut Street. The sidewalk was narrow. Pickering stepped off into the roadway. He either drew a knife or made a motion as if to do so. Blair thrust his umbrella forward into Pickering's face, making a mark which was noticeable several days.

A short time afterwards there was held a Free Soil meeting in the rotunda of the court house, then a favorite place for political gatherings. Blair made a speech. He started to leave by the Fourth Street front. As he stepped through the door out on the portico, which was semi-circular instead of the present form of architecture, a man greeted him with—"Good evening, Mr. Blair."

The Blair-  
Pickering  
Affair

The words were spoken loudly. Acknowledging the salutation, Blair continued across the portico to the steps leading down to the street. Another man standing at the bottom of the steps fired and ran. The ball went by. Blair drew his pistol and fired. He ran down the steps, and fired again, but without effect. At the inquiry, which followed, suspicion pointed to Dr. Prefontaine, a writer on the *Union*, as the one who had given the loud greeting. It was supposed that this was done to give notice to the person standing at the bottom of the steps that Blair was coming. There was no positive identification of the one who fired. Street lamps were not lighted that night because, as one witness explained, it was a "corporation moonlight" night. Pickering was arrested on suspicion, but was discharged. The proof against him was not positive, but the real reason why the case was not pushed was a secret agreement or understanding that he would leave Missouri. Pickering went to California with the gold-seekers, started a paper in San Francisco and became widely known and wealthy. Blair and Gantt were summoned to court for participating in a challenge to fight a duel. They pleaded guilty and were fined one dollar each. The district attorney who prosecuted was

## VII

## EX-MAYOR JOHN M. KRUM AS ADVISER

*T. C. Reynolds, Esq.*

*D'r Sir:*

*After I saw you last evening, I went to Col. Renick's house, but could not find him there nor anywhere else. His family did not know where he had gone. On my return, I called at the stable where he usually keeps his horse in hopes to get his track, but his horse, too, was away.*

*Will you have a copy of these documents made this morning, and I will see Col. R.?*

*Yours,*

*Ap. 29.*

*Jno. M. Krum.*

[Endorsed: "J. M. Krum, St. Louis, 29 April, 1854,"  
in the handwriting of Mr. Reynolds.]

THE EXPLANATORY NARRATIVE

Samuel T. Glover, who became one of the leaders of the St. Louis bar twenty years later. The judge who imposed the fine was James B. Colt, a brother of the maker of Colt's revolvers.

The Blair-Pickering affair was far-reaching in its relationship to newspaper destinies in St. Louis. With the departure of Pickering the *Union* not only changed hands, but entered upon a new political course. It took up the fight for Benton in his appeal from pro-slavery resolutions of the legislature. Blair and Brown contributed most of the editorials. Brown found newspaper work to his liking. When, in the summer of 1852, Giles F. and O. D. Filley, John How and a few others thought the time was opportune for a distinctively Free Soil paper in St. Louis, Blair and Brown joined them. The business men furnished the capital. Blair and Brown contributed the political and editorial talent. William McKee, who had a large job printing establishment, supplied the plant, for which he was given a half interest in the venture. The *Signal*, which had been conducted as a morning paper by a group of printers on a kind of co-operative plan, was purchased. The name of "*Missouri Democrat*" was chosen. The *Union* was absorbed.

The "card" which Reynolds and Goode prepared for publication in the *Democrat* did not appear. It was given to Renick, the "friend" of Brown, by Reynolds personally on the 26th of April, the indorsement in Reynolds' handwriting would indicate. Reynolds and Goode preferred this brief public notice that the incident was closed rather than the publication of the whole correspondence. Brown, however, seems to have felt differently. Examination of the *Democrat* files for several days following the delivery of the card to Renick does not show that any use was made of the suggestion from Reynolds and his "friend." Two or three days passed. John M. Krum, the ex-mayor and the author of "*Missouri Justice*," undertook to find Renick and reach an agreement as to what kind of publication should be made. Evidently from Krum's letter to Reynolds, dated April 29th, Brown preferred that the correspondence in full be printed without comment. Two days later, on the morning of the 1st of May, the correspondence, with the exception of Goode's letter containing the proposed "card," was printed on the editorial page of the *Democrat*. It was given no heading whatever, and was introduced in the briefest possible manner: "We have been requested to give publication to the following correspondence."

Brown  
Rejects  
the  
Reynolds  
Card

This ended the first controversy.











## THE SECOND CONTROVERSY

[1855]

*Newspaper Articles and Correspondence Result-  
ing in Challenge and Acceptance, but no Duel*

## I

## BOERNSTEIN, REYNOLDS AND THE KNOW NOTHINGS

[Local article preserved by Reynolds and credited in his handwriting, "Democrat, 17 March, '55"]

*Democrat 17 March 55*

## Bogus Meeting of the Know Nothings!

### Bœrnstein & Mitchell!

**"SAM" IN GREAT SPIRITS!!!**

#### *Citizens enjoying the Fun!*

The hybrid meeting which was gotten up by the bogus Republican and Bœrnstein came off last night, and notwithstanding the "reclimency of the weather," the performance was gone through with after the most approved fashion.

The assembled multitude (300 strong) were called to order in accordance with the programme by Mr. Mitchell of the Intelligencer, the avowed organ of the Know Nothings, who stated somewhat briefly the object intended, and moved that Mr. David Woods, a young barrister unknown to fame, take the chair, which motion was carried without a dissenting voice. After this a gentleman in german, got up and proposed a list of six vice presidents, not one of whom were present. His utterance was a little thick, and his motions somewhat on the see-saw order, but the list was carried—the meeting going it blind. So soon as the preliminaries were through with, a vociferous call for Dr. Boerstein was made, which in due time was responded to by the spectacled Doctor in all the ominous consequence of his own person. He began by saying "that he was not used to the English language, that this was his first (we hope it will be his last) attempt to speak in public in that tongue. He then went on to compliment the Know Nothings, to say that he was satisfied that their organization arose in a true republican sentiment, that it was the same feeling which had at different times pervaded every State of Europe, and that he had not the slightest disposition now to abuse them. He further added that he came not there to speak aught against any one, much less the Whigs or the

anti-Bentons, or the so-called Democrats. He had lately been attempted to be read out of the Democratic party by their organ, but this was not necessary. Was it of use to kill a dead man, or drive one out of the party who was already out? He had stated in his paper some months since, that he had abandoned that party, and it was, therefore, labor lost now to read him out of the ranks. He came there for a free meeting of all the people, (Here SAM cheered largely,) to have a ticket of Whigs and Democrats, and Bentons and anti-Bentons, *Jews and Gentiles*, against the Know Nothings. (Hush that, or we'll turn you out—came from the crowd.) He would say that he was far abandoning all other parties, and breaking them up, and having none but this party here to-night (Cries of "good," "good," from the Know Nothings all around.) For his own part he would say, that if any thought that the German citizens would submit to any exclusion, they were much mistaken—he would shed the last drop of the blood in his veins first. ("You better get your pay first" from the gallery.) It was not his desire to say much this evening for even if the Know Nothings should carry the present election, what would it amount to—merely excluding a few Germans and Irish from office, and in a few years it would be all over, and if they did not get their rights in this country, why they could go back again, (vociferous cheers from the meeting—great sensation amongst the *claqueurs*.) The Doctor concluded his remarks by saying that he had every regard for the Catholics, and since some months had said nothing against them. That he wanted to join with them this time in the municipal canvass, and would say nothing against them until it was all over. (His appeal to Catholics was very touching at this point, and he gave them plainly to know that hereafter he might take them up again for want of some better subject to abuse.) Great applause followed this speech of Dr. Boerstein which was admirably tempered to the feelings of his new Know Nothing allies, and it was evi

THE EXPLANATORY NARRATIVE

Politics in St. Louis, from 1850 to 1860, was a continuous performance. At the time of the Brown-Reynolds controversies a mayor and a city ticket were elected annually. In August, 1854, Benton was defeated for the House of Representatives at Washington by Kennett, the ex-mayor of St. Louis. At that same election members of the legislature were elected on Benton and Anti-Benton tickets, but when the legislature met in the winter of 1855, the Benton men could poll only forty votes. The other candidates were Atchison and Doniphan. The Benton men would not go to either. So bitter was the personal feeling between the Democratic factions that the legislature was allowed to deadlock until final adjournment. When Atchison's term expired, Missouri was represented by only one senator. In March, 1855, came the municipal campaign. The "off year" in politics was unknown in that period. The election of August, 1854, had been carried against Benton by a combination of Anti-Benton Democrats, Know Nothings and The Whigs. And now, for the municipal election of 1855, another combination was forming to beat the local Benton party in the election of a mayor. Boernstein was in it. Against the alliance of the German boss and the Know Nothings, the *Democrat* opened war. The attempt to coalesce the Native American and the German vote gave fine opportunity for ridicule. The *Democrat* was unsparing in its local, as well as its editorial columns. Reynolds had entered into a business enterprise with Boernstein. The two were partners in a brewery. Boernstein was the chief object of attack; the opportunity to hold Reynolds up to public scorn was not overlooked.

His second controversy with Brown, as Reynolds preserved it in documentary form, opened with a local account in the *Democrat* of a meeting held to unite the various elements on an Anti-Benton municipal ticket. Speakers failed to harmonize and auditors were free with their interruptions. The *Democrat* reporter, in his "story" of the speeches and the scenes produced about two columns of what a later generation in journalism would have pronounced "hot stuff." Reynolds did not appear in the report of the meeting, but in the very next column of the *Democrat* was a letter devoted to him and his brewery association with Boernstein. The correspondence which followed between Reynolds and Brown was altogether different in tone from that of the first controversy, eleven months before. It led quickly to the challenge.

Know Nothings were active in St. Louis about 1854-6. They had many lodges. Along Fourth Street, in the court house rotunda, on 'change, wherever men most congregated, bits of white paper cut in triangular form were scattered frequently. They bore not a word in print, not a mark of any kind. The St. Louisan leaving home for business in the morning saw these

The  
Boernstein  
Know  
Nothing  
Combina-  
tion

Mysteries  
of the  
Order  
of Sam

dent at a glance that it was a pre-arranged coalition between them, only the latter could not sufficiently master their feelings to play out the ruse with serious countenances. A deadly pause here ensued. Who should come next—the Know Nothings were getting impatient—they liked the fun, but had not been fully posted as to their parts, and so they called out the gentleman who had inaugurated the meeting, and had given tone to it throughout, to-wit: Mr. A. S. Mitchell, the editor of the *Intelligencer*. Mr Mitchell was somewhat diffident at first, owing, perhaps, to his having no longer ago than the first day of March last published the "principles and objects of the American party," with his own full endorsement on the back. He hesitated, thinking the game a little too bold to win, but finally pitched in with a vengeance. He apologised for the absence of Sam on the occasion, (tremendous cheers) but he thought a few words in such a meeting, in Sam's behalf, might meet with some applause, (cries of "go on, go on—keep dark—mam's the word.") For his own part he had helped to organise the meeting, but he now spoke as an independent man, and he felt that some of the remarks of Dr. Boernstein were very ill-judged and rhetorical, although upon the whole he liked his speech. It was well gotten up, and the gentleman deserved credit for the manner in which he attributed honest and sincere, and patriotic motives to those belonging to the American party—sometimes called Know Nothings, but better known as SAM. He had been struck with consternation however at one remark of the Doctor's, to the effect that if things went on as they now promised in the United States, he would not submit. Not submit—he would have to submit—he should submit—he had already submitted. (Deafening cheers.) Mr. Mitchell then went on to make a most effective speech, in which it was apparent on all sides that the sentiment of the meeting was clearly right so far as he was concerned. He discoursed exceedingly well, and we must do him the justice to say that he made the only shrewd and sensible speech on the occasion. He took up the Cuban question, and abused the Administration handsomely, for its insensate course in regard to Cuba, and concluded by hoping that it would no longer permit the American flag to be insulted upon every sea. We cannot pretend to give either the wit, humor, sarcasm, or eloquent appeal upon Cuban annexation, of the accomplished editor of the *Intelligencer*, but those who

heard him will not soon forget the inimitable lashing, in a genteel way, which he administered to the editor of the *Anzeiger des Westens*, for going out of his role and speaking disrespectfully of the Know Nothings, when such language was not in the bond.

Mr. Mitchell was followed by Mr. Woods, the chairman of the meeting, and strange to say his first sentence was one promising briefness, which we regret to record was not fulfilled. His remarks upon the whole were so erratic, so *recherché*, so unique, so opaque, that an ordinary intellect could not keep pace with the brilliant acintillations of his genius. We heard many of his admirers exclaim, "that it was a pity that one who spoke so well should ever speak in vain." "He undoubtedly has the ears of Midas without his brains," observed another. While a third insisted that "he had the honey of Nestor upon his lips, without his sense." Be this as it may Mr. Wood delivered an oration, suitable for such an occasion, and for such an occasion alone. It was full of tropes and figures, rhetorical graces and eloquent periods—particularly the concluding one, where he exclaimed, "God forbid, that ever the eagle upon the star-spangled banner should suck oranges in Cuba." Our reporter will do justice to Mr. W. at some future period. It must satisfy our readers to know that he entered paradise with "Adam and his caterpillars," slightly noticed Julius Cæsar, at the crossing of the Rubicon, passed through Greece on the back of Demosthenes; went with the Phœnicians into England; was with the Barons at Runnymede and handed the pen to King John when he signed Magna Charter; crossed the Atlantic with Christopher Columbus; fought atunker Hill; signed the Declaration of Independence; invoked the spirit of General Jackson from the Hermitage; and concluded by a remarkable peroration in which only the sounds of Adam, Napoleon, wars, races, sects, Mr. Mitchell and the news-baza could be faintly heard amid the tumultuous applause which followed.

So soon as this was ended, for everything must have an end, even speeches, Mr. Mitchell insisted upon being heard in reply—which Dr. Boernstein was equally desirous of having another hearing. Mr. M. got the stand, and after ten minutes of the most confused noises and sounds from a steam whistle to a suppressed "git out" obtained a hearing, and gave the chairman of his own selection and nomination one of the most unparralled dressings down ever

THE EXPLANATORY NARRATIVE

pieces of paper lying about, seemingly without purpose. If he was a Know Nothing he knew at once that a meeting of the order was called for that evening. Recognizing a fellow member of the order and wishing to learn what was going on, he asked, "Have you seen Sam to-day?"

That paved the way to the most confidential communications among members of the order. If the inquirer was a new member and not certain about the status of the one addressed, he asked, in a casual tone, "What time?"

If the other looked at the sun or consulted his watch and made the answer which the question seemed to invite, the interview ended. But the answer might be, "Time to work."

Then the first St. Louisan, dropping his voice so that he might not be overheard, asked, "Are you?"

"We are," was the proper and assuring reply. After that the conversation proceeded on safe ground.

Sometimes the triangular pieces of paper were not white, but red. That meant danger. It prompted, on the part of those who had not been informed, more than ordinary curiosity about "Sam." When St. Louisans went to lodge on the red notices they carried stout canes or some form of weapon for emergency.

One rule of instruction given to new members directed them, when asked by outsiders about the principles and purposes of the order, to say, "I know nothing."

From this form came the name commonly applied to the movement and to the membership.

The Know Nothings were Native Americans. Their political watchword was: "Put none but Americans on guard." The American party became strong enough in St. Louis to carry, two or three times, the municipal elections. The turbulent members of the order started anti-foreign and anti-Catholic riots. For several years the lodges and the party organization devoted most of their attention to local politics.

In 1854, the year of the first controversy between Brown and Reynolds, the movement had gained strength in all parts of the United States. Several State elections were carried by the Native Americans. In 1855 a national organization was effected. In 1856 eight of the thirty-two States had Native American governments. But when the Know Nothings attempted to make a nomination for President, a division among them on the slavery question occurred. The Southern Know Nothings nominated Fillmore. Many of the Northern Know Nothings seceded and indorsed Fremont. After that national campaign, Know Nothingism dwindled and disappeared.

In 1855 the order attained its greatest strength in St. Louis. Thousands joined, taking the first degree of "Sam." The candidate was sworn to

recorded in ancient or modern history. He as simulated him—but we will not attempt description, for description would fail to “do justice to the occasion”—summe it to say that he gave a short drill muster to the recruit which brought him to the music all standing, and when Mr. Woods attempted to explain, he was drowned amid the noise and confusion prevalent. Nothing more was heard or said, but just at this moment Gen. Ranney was seen coming up the stair, and was barely in time (as we are informed) to move an adjournment.

Comment is perhaps useless upon such an assemblage. It was a contrivance in the first place to cheat the Democratic party—to buy over the Anzeiger—and to secure the success of the Know Nothings. In every respect it has been a failure—a most miserable failure in numbers, in spirit, in execution, and in effect. The secret coalition between the Anzeiger and the Know Nothings, leaked out at the very outset, when Mr. Mitchell of the Intelligencer, the avowed and recognized organ of the Know Nothings took the lead in opening the meeting, and choosing its president. It was further developed in the speech of Boernstein, so complimentary to Know Nothingism, and so exculpatory of all their actions and intentions. It was finally proven by the action of the meeting itself, which greeted with its loudest plaudits those sentiments which were most hostile to the proclaimed object of the meeting. Resolutions were adopted by the assemblage, to appoint a committee of twenty to select candidates, and yet the meeting adjourned without their appointment. Motions were made to meet again, but were never acted upon, and the finale was that it all broke up in the most ridiculous farce ever yet enacted in St. Louis. There was fun everywhere—fun in the beginning at its being called to order by the Editor of the Know Nothing organ in St. Louis—fun in seeing one presumed to be a Know Nothing, appointed President—fun in seeing an evident Know Nothing attempt to read the list of Vice Presidents—fun in the manner in which Boernstein attempted to make an anti-Know Nothing speech without offending the Know Nothings—his principal auditors and claquers—fun in Mitchell’s choice castigation of Boernstein for not speaking in character without offending the omnipotent Sam—fun even in the voluminous remarks of the President of the meeting—fun in the rejoinders, and last of all fun in the confused ad-

journment which seemed to have forgotten altogether the object for which the mixed multitude was called together.

One thing, however, stands out in very bold relief, and that is the BARGAIN AND SALE by which the Anzeiger is expected to help to elect the Know Nothing ticket; and another thing is also plain, which is that the trick is being now fully understood and made manifest to all eyes, it will not loose the Democracy a single vote in the election, but will add to its strength. Mr. Boernstein was seen in consultation with Mr. Paschall, of the Republican, at 4 o’clock in the afternoon, and there the matter was all arranged; but Paschall was sly—did not attend—the meeting miscarried—and he will now be the first to denounce the whole thing, and try to get up a clean Whig ticket by way of retreat, and to keep Whigs from coalescing against the Know Nothings. There may be even a dying effort made on the part of the Chairman to appoint and publish a committee of nomination—as an after thought, but even this will not now do. The failure was too immense, too PRODIGIOUS to be gotten over by such slender contrivances. Peace to its remains.

THE EXPLANATORY NARRATIVE

secrecy and then examined. To be eligible he must make oath that he was twenty-one years old; that he was born in the United States; that he believed in God; that his parents were not Roman Catholics; that he was reared a Protestant; that neither his wife nor he was a Roman Catholic. Having shown that he was eligible, the candidate was taken into another room and sworn into the order. He placed his right hand on the Bible and raised his left. He swore he would vote for Protestants only, Native Americans and those who stood on the platform of America ruled by Americans. Then the password, the sign of recognition and the grip were given.

There was a second degree, into which the candidate was initiated when he had proven that he was loyal and deeply interested. This was conferred with much ceremony. At the conclusion the presiding officer declared solemnly:

"Brother, you are a member in full fellowship of the Supreme Order of the Star Spangled Banner."

A third degree was added after the success in the State elections of 1854. It was called the order of the American Union. It pledged the membership to stand against any division of the States. It aimed to suppress the agitation of the slavery question by either the North or the South. In six months 1,500,000 candidates had taken the third degree.

Order of  
the Star  
Spangled  
Banner

At this time, 1855, Henry Boernstein was the most conspicuous of the "acht-und-vierzigers" in St. Louis. That was the name bestowed locally on the forty-eighters—the participants in the revolution of '48.

Boernstein came to St. Louis with a great variety of experiences. And he proceeded to enlarge upon them rapidly by his career in this country. He had received a university education in Germany, had served five years in the Austrian army, had written plays, which were produced in European capitals, had managed grand opera in Paris, had been a newspaper correspondent. When the uprising occurred in Germany, Boernstein joined the revolutionists. He was forced to flee to America and after a short time became editor of the *Anzeiger*. Almost immediately he introduced sensational methods. Again and again mobs formed to "clean out" the *Anzeiger*. Boernstein was daring. He did not confine his activities to the newspaper. He carried on a theatre, a hotel and a brewery. He wrote a book which he called "The Mysteries of St. Louis." In the organization of the German militia during the winter of 1860-1, months before President Lincoln was inaugurated, Boernstein was so aggressive that he was made colonel of one of the five regiments. He marched with Lyon to the capture of Camp Jackson. Soon tiring of war, Boernstein obtained a consulship and went to Europe. He remained abroad and for many years was European correspondent for American papers.

Boern-  
stein's  
Varied  
Activities

## II

## ANTI-KNOW NOTHING COMMUNICATION

[Published the 17th of March, 1855, immediately following the "Bogus Meeting" article; preserved by Reynolds]

For the Missouri Democrat.

### A Curious Document

*Fraught with Useful Information and Disclosing a Tale.*

Below we present to our readers a document which reflects light on certain transactions the full significance of which have not heretofore been understood.

The document discloses the fact that a gentleman, but lately arrived in St. Louis, a Virginian by birth, a sprout of one of the first families of the "Mother of Presidents," and hence a fit compeer and particular friend of the Honorable George W. Goode, who speaks of mechanics, artizans and laborers generally, as *white slaves*, we say this document discloses the fact that this gentleman, late Secretary of Legation, and in spite of his brief residence amongst us, already District Attorney of the United States, so appointed by Mr. Pierce under Atchison influences, and Attorney of the Iron Mountain railroad, so appointed under the auspices of Hon. Luther M. Kennett, the president of that road, has seen fit to add to the chaplet of political and juridical laurels that adorn his brow, a civic crown of plain, old fashioned brewers' hops.

The barrister, after the mental fatigues of the day, following on the midnight lucubrations of the preceding night, the eminent counsel, we say, steps from the library, the studio, the sanctum of lore and science, into the *beer vats* of the Salvator (our Savior's) brewery,—inhales the aroma of the sweltering malt, to *strengthen his lungs*, gauges the beer casks, to *keep up o knowledge of spherical trigonometry*, and tastes the liquor to preserve a lively remembrance of the primordial habits of Norman chivalry. It cannot be that such an officeholder, soaring to the ambrosial vicinity Presidential favor, would become a beer brewer for the sake of five-cent glasses, that are tolled out in the adjunct beer shops of that establishment. It cannot be that this representative of the federal government, would incur the risk of being drawn up in the Criminal court for keeping open beer house on Sunday, or in the Calaboose court for selling beer without city license,—all for mere filthy lucra.

Who, then, can tell us why this barrister brews beer and provides for two or three retail bars?

Whilst suspending our remarks to hear an answer, we will here introduce the document:

The undersigned hereby certify that under the act of the General Assembly of the State of Missouri, approved March 12, 1849, entitled "An act to authorize the formation of corporations for manufacturing, mining, mechanical or chemical purposes," we have this day, the 4th day of March, 1854, formed a company, the corporate name of which is the "Salvator Brewery Company of St. Louis," for the object of manufacturing all kinds of beer, ale and vinegar, and also all other articles usually connected with the brewer's business; that the amount of the capital stock of said company is seven thousand five hundred dollars, divided into thirteen shares of five hundred dollars each; that the term of its proposed existence is five years from this day forward; that the directors who shall manage the concerns of said company for the first year are three in number, to wit: Henry Boernstein, Frederick Schaeffer and Thomas J. Reynolds, all citizens of the State and of the United States, and stockholders in said company; and the operations of said company are to be carried on at the city and county of St. Louis, State of Missouri. In witness whereof, we hereunto sign our names and affix our seals, at St. Louis aforesaid, this fourth day of March, 1854.

HENRY BOERNSTEIN, [seal.]

FR. SCHAEFFER, [seal.]

THOS. J. REYNOLDS, [seal.]

Follows affidavit of the three beer brewers before Chas. G. Mauro, the notary public; then comes the certificate of the Secretary of State, and finally recorded March 23, 1855, Wm. J. HAMMOND, clerk.

See records of Circuit court, entitled "License of Incorporations."

Surely it cannot be that our friend, the Hon. Mr. G. W. Goode, had the twin partners, Reynolds and Boernstein, in his mind when he discoursed about "*white slaves*," for those gentlemen are too smart to brew beer like other brewers, they brew charter beer, besides brewing political mischief. They are not bound to pay their brewery debts like other brewers, they are lawyers enough to guard against such "*white slavery*" as that. They know how to draw contracts and make sham devices that shield them against Sunday indictments, whilst other men are hauled up man for man and made to pay fine upon fine, and lawyers fees besides, these gentlemen can be their own lawyers, and certainly no lawyer could be a "*white slave*." No! No! Such gentlemen as those, are not of that really honest and deserving category of laborers, derided as "*white slaves*" by the St. Louis representative: they only turn an honest penny in politics together. Boernstein exposes his countrymen to mobs and conflagrations by his insane course, and not only saves his own bacon, but turns an honest

THE EXPLANATORY NARRATIVE

Brewing of beer was a flourishing industry in St. Louis when Reynolds joined Boernstein in the organization of the Salvator Company, as set forth in the "curious document" which the *Democrat* printed with a correspondent's comments. About 1840, Adam Lemp started a small brewery on Second Street, near Walnut. In front of the brewery proper and the vaults where the beer "lagered," was a large public hall with round tables and many chairs. "Lemp's" became one of the institutions of St. Louis. Business and professional men gathered about the tables, drank the "lager" as they commonly called it, and talked politics.

With the swelling tide of German immigration, the breweries increased rapidly. In the years 1848-50 there were added to the population of St. Louis 34,418 Germans. About the time of the Brown-Reynolds duel the breweries numbered nearly forty. They were making 23,000 barrels of beer annually. Most of the product was for home consumption. A local statistician estimated that the output was 658 glasses for each St. Louisan. Reynolds was one of many who contributed to the \$600,000 capital employed in the industry. But the stock in the company promoted by the district attorney and the editor, it will be observed, was only \$7,500. The *Democrat's* correspondent questioned the sincerity of this act of Reynolds and assumed that the Salvator Company was a cover for a political conspiracy, "formed for the purpose of defeating Benton." This assumption may or may not have been true; the publication of it is a revelation of the kind of politics which prevailed at that time in St. Louis.

The  
Brewery  
Business  
in 1850-60

"Benton must be destroyed" was the moving inspiration of the opposition in the local campaigns of 1854-6. The Pierce administration had turned over to Senator Atchison the Federal patronage in Missouri as its contribution to the cause of the "Anties." Reynolds had been selected for a conspicuous part in St. Louis. He had been made United States district attorney. His education in a German university qualified him to speak to German audiences at St. Louis in their own tongue. The partnership between Reynolds and Boernstein at such a time, in the midst of the municipal campaign of 1855, seemed to the Benton people to mean politics rather than business.

In the August campaign of 1854, only a few months previous to this, when Benton was an unsuccessful candidate for Congress, Boernstein pandered to the Know Nothing prejudices by anti-Catholic articles in the *Anzeiger*. These articles were translated and republished in the *Missouri Republican*, credited to the *Anzeiger*, to drive Catholic support from Benton. The *Democrat's* correspondent, "Anti-Know Nothing," insinuated that by secret intrigue Reynolds prompted Boernstein, who at that time was ostensibly friendly to Benton, to assail the Catholics; that

Boernstein  
Invoked  
Prejudices

penny, through his beer partner, with the Ne-braskas, the anti Bentons and the Know Nothings.

There can be no doubt then, that this mongrel partnership was formed for the purpose of defeating Benton. The lawyer set the triggers, the scribbler put them in his paper, the brewery served as the cloak and bond of union, and the district attorney then caused the firebrands to be translated and served up to the Republican.

Thus Mr. Reynolds subserved the desires of his two employers, L. M. Kennett and Bourbon Atchison, whilst the Anzeiger des Westens did-dled Benton's constituency out of their dearest rights, and contributed largely in conjunction with the Republican to produce the mob and

bloodshed in the city. Benton was defeated by the Know Nothings, antics and Whigs. Boernstein now wants to lead the anti-Know Nothing onslaught, in order to deliver the city government over to the Know Nothings by the same artifices he practised so successfully in August last.—No one can doubt that Mr. Reynolds, the attorney for the Iron Mountain railroad, the striker and employee of Mr. Kennett, instigated his partner Boernstein to assail the Catholics, and then translated the assaults for the columns of the Republican, in order to drive the Catholics from Benton, whilst professing to support him. Boernstein and Reynolds are partners in brewing mischief, as well as beer.

ANTI-KNOW-NOTHING.

### III

## BOERNSTEIN AND RELIGION

[Published the 17th of March, 1855, following the Anti-Know Nothing letter]

[For the Missouri Democrat.]

### Rivalry between the Parisien and American Know Nothings.

MA. EDITOR: You showed in your paper of yesterday, how Boernstein had suddenly, from a constant derider of the Catholic religion, endeavored to place himself at the head of the Catholic voters of this city, by suggesting a *mule* ticket, headed by, and containing a majority of Catholic candidates—a plan which was evidently gotten up by the Know Nothings, as the most convenient mode of ensuring their victory. Now, let me show to you how the traitor wants to wind out of this just charge. He says in his morning's paper:

"The Democrat endeavors to bring the Anzeiger into disrepute," (you plainly denounced him as a traitor,) "and, to set the Catholics in particular against us. Vain trouble! Every reader of ours knows that from the moment when the Know Nothings labored for the annihilation of religious liberty, we ENTERED THE LISTS AGAINST THEM, and at the same time labored with all our power to concentrate all opponents of Nativism to a common resistance against the Know Nothings."

What a new born zeal on behalf of the Anzeiger! It claims not only the monopoly of naturalization, and of making *mule* tickets for us, but it also claims the sole right of persecuting the Roman Catholics, and so soon as any American Know Nothing undertakes to interfere with this monopoly of the Anzeiger's, it turns around and joins its persecuted enemies, to beat the

rivals on the head. Of course, so soon as the Know Nothing rival is beaten, the Anzeiger will return to its vomit, in other words, it will recommence the persecution of the defenseless victims. The war will then be more bitter than ever. This is surely a just inference of the Anzeiger's remarks, and of its past conduct. But Boernstein plainly points to his future course in this respect: "True it is, we are still unconverted to the doctrine of the holy Ignace of Loyola, but we are too much occupied with other cares, as that we (now) could or would grant them our former attention. We demand of the leaders of the so called true Democracy, and of the Demperat, their organ, that they will imitate our example, and will fight out their nullifier war at a more suitable opportunity."

Thus it is plain that the war against the Catholics is to be fought out to the bitter end so soon as Boernstein is otherwise disengaged. He will then dress up the Roman Catholics Cœur à la mode.

What a fine hint of conciliation the traitor throws out to us: "I stop my war against the Catholics, so you stop your war against the nullifiers; and then, when we have won the victory, you give it to your Jew as I give it to my Jew." A precious good and charitable bargain! What a fine schooling Boernstein has gone through with his new allies! Go, traitor, be-gone forever, infamous apostate!

A DEMOCRAT.

THE EXPLANATORY NARRATIVE

Reynolds translated these anti-Catholic articles and furnished them to the *Republican*. Benton was beaten, but the appeals to religious prejudices resulted in the worst election riots St. Louis had experienced.

At the Fifth Ward polls an Irishman stabbed a boy and ran into the Mechanics' boarding house. A Know Nothing mob followed, smashed the windows and broke the furniture. Shots were fired. Other boarding houses in the neighborhood were attacked. The mob, increased to a thousand or more, marched to Cherry Street and continued the wrecking of boarding houses. It headed for the Levee and met a body of Irishmen. In the fight two men were killed. The mob stormed and stoned buildings known as "Battle Row," on the Levee. Doors were broken in and furniture destroyed. Thence the mob proceeded up town, wrecking Irish boarding houses on Morgan, Cherry and Green Streets. At Drayman's Hall, on Eighth Street and Franklin Avenue, the mob divided into squads and gutted several saloons, continuing this until the militia arrived.

Rioting was resumed the next day. The Continentals, while marching along Green Street on guard duty, were fired on. Two of the militia, Spore and Holliday, were wounded. Near Seventh and Biddle Streets E. R. Violet, a well known and popular citizen, attempting to disarm a man who was flourishing a pistol, was killed. At Broadway and Ashley there was a battle in which a saloon keeper named Snyder was killed. Three men were wounded. The rioting went on in various parts of the city until late that night. The third day citizens responded to a mass meeting call by the mayor. From the Merchants' Exchange they adjourned to the court house. A law and order movement was organized by popular expression and Norman J. Eaton was made the head of it. Before the day passed an armed force of seven hundred citizens had been formed under command of Major Meriwether Lewis Clark. The force was divided into thirty-three companies, each under a captain. It was composed of the best elements in the community. These companies went on patrol duty, covering the whole city. The regular police were withdrawn from the streets. Rioting ceased, but the memory of the disorder was fresh the following March.

St. Louis  
Know  
Nothing  
Riots  
of 1854

"Anti-Know Nothing" held Reynolds and Boernstein largely responsible for the August reign of terror. "A Democrat," in a letter to the *Democrat*, followed with the charge that Boernstein was plotting more treachery to the Benton party in the municipal campaign. The *Democrat*, editorially, while not touching on the main points of the two communications, arraigned Boernstein for an alleged false oath in the Salvator Brewing Company's application for incorporation. The next day "A Naturalized German," in a letter to the *Democrat*, assailed Boernstein's course as traitorous in politics. The *Demo-*

## IV

## EDITORIAL COMMENT ON THE BREWING CHARTER

[From the Missouri Democrat, March 20, 1855]

## IS IT PERJURY OR IS IT NOT?

*The beer brewery charter of Messrs. Reynolds, Boernstein and Schaffer, a true copy of which was published in the Democrat of Saturday last, contained the following language:*

*Henry Boernstein, Frederick Schaffer and Thomas C. Reynolds, all citizens of the State and of the United States.*

*This was sworn to by the three above-named beer brewers on the 4th day of March, 1854, as is attested by the notarial seal and certificate of Charles G. Mauro. Mr. Boernstein, upon oath, swore that he was a citizen of Missouri and of the United States of America on the 4th day of March last. By referring to another document, which was published in the Democrat of yesterday, being the final naturalization papers of Henry Boernstein, it will be seen that he there swore that he was not only a "native of France," but that he also renounced all allegiance to the Emperor of France, "of whom he is at present (April 3d, 1854) a subject." This, we say, was also given under oath before the criminal judge in the criminal court and just one month after he had sworn that he was already a citizen of the State of Missouri and of the United States. Verily, fools rush in where angels fear to tread and no one but Boernstein would have dared to take such lessons in conflicting oaths in the very presence itself of the first criminal court of the county.*

## V

## THE SALVATOR BREWERY ISSUE

[Communication clipped from Democrat and credited in handwriting of Reynolds, "Dem., 21 March, '55"]

**Dem. 21 March 55**  
 [For the Missouri Democrat.]  
**Boernstein and Reynolds, the Beer and Mischief Brewers.**  
 The new temperance law is the last resort to which that would be empire of this community, the Anzeiger, is reduced. Henry Boernstein, who started with the *outrageous* plan of slaying the Know Nothings, has dwindled down to his true level; he now-a-days only discusses the new temperance law, and endeavors to undermine the Benton Democracy, because the Know Nothings smuggled a restriction on public houses through the Legislature. Indeed, so ignorant is the Anzeiger of men and matters and things,

THE EXPLANATORY NARRATIVE

*crat* headed the communication "Boernstein and Reynolds, the Beer and Mischief Brewers," although Reynolds was not mentioned in the article. While Boernstein was apparently the chief object of attack in these newspaper communications, Reynolds demanded an apology, and the second controversy was begun.

Nowhere in the correspondence between Brown and Reynolds does Benton appear as advising or taking an active interest. But the controversies grew out of the intensity of feeling between the Benton and Anti-Benton factions. They were Benton controversies. More frequently than any other, the name of Benton had been connected with practice under the code at St. Louis. Benton had been a principal in one fatal duel. He had been an adviser in another fatal duel. He had been second in a duel. As a lawyer he had defended duellists. He had been the historian of duels. And now duelling was going out of fashion at St. Louis with Benton's personality the inspiration for the last of the long series of duels.

Forty years previously Benton had come to St. Louis to live. The year after his coming he instructed St. Louisans in the code. He was second in a duel as early as 1816 and drew with punctilious nicety the rules for the meeting and later the official report upon it. Although not the first of the St. Louis duels, this was one of the earliest and it established forms and precedents which were followed, even down to the controversies of Brown and Reynolds.

These are the documents preserved by the Missouri Historical Society, which show the activity of Thomas H. Benton as a second the year after he took up his residence in St. Louis:

Rules of the meeting between Mr. J. Barton demanding and Mr. T. Hempstead answering:

- 1.—The ground will be measured off to six paces.
- 2.—The gentlemen will stand back to back at the distance of six paces from each other. Rules of the
- 3.—At the word "March" the gentlemen will instantly step off three paces and turn and fire without further order. Barton-Hempstead
- 4.—If either party reserves his fire, and continues to take aim after the other has fired, he shall be shot instantly by the adverse second. Meeting
- 5.—The seconds shall decide by lot which gives the word.
- 6.—The only words shall be "Are you ready?" and being answered in the affirmative, the word "March" shall be the order for stepping off and turning and firing, as above stated.
- 7.—The meeting at 5.00 o'clock this evening on the island in the Mississippi, opposite LeRoy, on the upper end of the island.
- 8.—The weapons, smooth bore pistols.
- 9.—The pistols to be delivered cocked to the gentlemen after they have taken their places, and to be held hanging down by the side until after the word "March."

Signed in duplicate, August 10th, 1816, at St. Louis.

T. H. BENTON for MR. HEMPSTEAD,  
EDWARD BATES for MR. BARTON.

that he enumerates in one of his late beer philippics, our worthy fellow-citizen, the Know Nothing Whig, Mr. Holmes, as a Benton Senator in the Legislature. I am fond of a glass of beer, or ale, or wine. I think these wholesome drinks for all those who exercise. I think that all sumptuary laws are tyrannical; but, surely, I am ashamed of a German press which, by its daily publications, leads the unwary public into the belief that the Germans would sell their American franchisees for the privilege of keeping coffee houses on Sunday. That is the precise position now of the traitor Boernstein; he endeavors to place the Know Nothings into the administration of the city and of the whole country, by telling his readers that they ought to vote a straw ticket rather than the Democratic one, because the Know Nothings had smuggled the temperance resolutions through the Legislature. So we are to forego our rights as American citizens, because we cannot drink beer on Sunday in one of the three Salvador beer shops. I presume that Mr. Boernstein has an understanding with the Know Nothings, that they, when arrived at full sway in the councils of the nation, will stop every other beer shop in the whole country, week days as well as Sundays; but that the beer shops of the Salvador brewery may pour forth uninterrupted streams to the thirsty people at all times, without hindrance or redemption of a license.

I can tell you, Mr. Editor, that the Germans of this county have helped to send the Benton Democrats to Jefferson city,

not merely to watch the interests of the Salvador brewery, and not merely to please the dreggy, muddled understandings of such as Boernstein. At the same time, the Germans know that the Benton Democracy, whilst they are just as temperate as any class of the community, are not in favor of any sumptuary laws whatever.

But I think, that Mr. Boernstein is so much engaged with his (Saviour) Salvador brewery, that he nearly *neglected* his newspaper, excepting as an engine of periodical distraction, now on one, then on the other side. He says that the *Anzeiger* had no correspondent at Jefferson City. And why not? Does that traitor not boast every now and then of having the largest circulation of any paper in the city? Then was he certainly well able to send a correspondent to Jefferson City during the brief session of the Legislature. Say he had spent \$100 or \$150 for a correspondent, who had placed himself in correspondence with the Democratic representation, and drawn their attention to anything that seemed to need more attention. Boernstein might then have saved infinite trouble to many of his much more legitimate fellow believers, but that never entered his mind.

The long and the short of the matter is this, that Boernstein is a *mischief brewer*, and he cares more for the sale of his mischief than for all the beer and beer drinkers, and Maine and anti-Maine liquor men in the world.

A NATURALIZED GERMAN.

## VI

### REYNOLDS DEMANDS AN APOLOGY

ST. LOUIS, MO., 20 March, 1855

B. Gratz Brown, Esqr.

Sir:

*Your editorial of this morning I consider an adoption of the communication in your paper of the 17th inst., signed "Anti-Know Nothing."*

*I call on your sense of gentlemanly propriety, and ask a withdrawal of your editorial of to-day, a disavowal and repudiation of the communication of the 17th, and an apology for their insertion in your columns.*

*I am, sir,*

*Your obedient servant,*

Thomas C. Reynolds.

[Delivered at 4 p. m.,  
20 March, '55—W. A. Linn.]

THE EXPLANATORY NARRATIVE

The undersigned, present at the meeting between Mr. Thomas Hempstead and Mr. Joshua Barton on the evening of Saturday, the 10th instant, state:

That as soon as the parties met, the ground was measured off by the undersigned and the pistols loaded in each other's presence. The choice of position and the right of giving the word was decided by lot.

The gentlemen immediately took their station and fired as nearly as could be in the same instant, and exactly conformable to the rules agreed upon; each conducted himself in a firm, cool and collected manner.

After the first fire the party demanding satisfaction declared that it had been given, and no explanation, concession or even mention of the cause of difference was made upon the ground, but the gentlemen shook hands as friends, upon a mutual declaration that they owed each other no ill will, and upon the unanimous declaration of the friends and surgeons present that the affair ought not to proceed any further.

The undersigned state it as their opinion that the conduct of both gentlemen was perfectly honorable and correct.

Signed in duplicate, August 13th, 1816.

THOMAS H. BENTON,  
EDWARD BATES.

Reynolds' demand of an apology, sent by his "friend" Linn, on the 20th of March, 1855, was quite different from the original draft which Reynolds retained. The latter version was:

ST. LOUIS, MO., 20 March, 1855.

B. GRATZ BROWN, ESQ.

SIR:

Your editorial of this morning I consider an adoption of the communication in your paper of the 17th inst., signed "Anti-Know Nothing."

I call on your sense of gentlemanly propriety, and ask a withdrawal of your editorial of to-day, a disavowal and repudiation of the communication of the 17th, and an apology for their insertion in your columns; and also a pledge on your part that the columns of the *Democrat* shall no longer be used for the mention of my private affairs or of my political course except in a decent and temperate tone for the discussion of my political or official actions.

I am, sir,

Your obedient servant,

THOMAS C. REYNOLDS.

[Delivered at 4 p. m.,  
20 March, '55. W. A. Linn.]

By comparison, it will be seen that the request for a pledge binding the editor of the *Democrat* to refrain from further publications of objectionable character was omitted in the letter "officially" delivered. But there was no erasure—nothing to show that the change had been made. In the letters coming from Reynolds' side of the controversies, both those written by the principal and those emanating from his seconds, many alterations were made. First drafts were not copied exactly, as the two sets of papers in the Bixby collection show. Seemingly, Reynolds framed his letters and then submitted them to advisers of experience in the technicalities of the code. Words, phrases

## VII

## BROWN HAS "NO APOLOGIES TO MAKE"

ST. LOUIS, March 21st, 1855

*Thos. C. Reynolds, Esq.*

Sir:

*In reply to your note, handed to me yesterday morning by W. A. Linn, Esq., I desire to state that the assumption that my editorial of yesterday was an adoption of the communication in the Democrat of the 17th inst., signed "Anti-Know Nothing," is totally unwarranted by the facts and I cannot consider it in any other light than as an attempt, by making an unfounded assumption, to avoid proceeding in the usual manner to ascertain the name of the author of the communication by which you consider yourself to be aggrieved.*

*Your demand proceeding upon this incorrect basis, I consider an attempt to dictate and bully, which I shall treat as it deserves. I will not allow you to make a false issue with me, nor to dictate to me what I shall or shall not repudiate and disavow in my journal. I must therefore decline any withdrawal of my editorials until first satisfied of their inaccuracy or injustice, and consequently have no apologies to make.*

*I am, sir,**Yours very respectfully,**B. Gratz Brown.*

[Rec'd 12½, March 21—W. A. Linn.]

## VIII

## A VERBAL CHALLENGE TRANSMITTED

ST. LOUIS, Mo., 21st March, 1855

*B. Gratz Brown, Esq.*

Sir:

*Your note of yesterday is received.*

*Whether there is any attempt to "dictate and bully" on my part, I am willing to leave to the impartial decision of all who may read my note of yesterday and the matters which gave rise to it.*

*There is nothing in my note which entitles you to say that I consider myself "aggrieved" by the communication itself apart from your obvious endorsement of it in your editorial. But independent of the question whether a gentleman is called on to notice anonymous scribblers in a newspaper, I have the universally recognized right to pass by*

THE EXPLANATORY NARRATIVE

and even whole sentences were substituted for those first chosen. The probability of publication evidently was kept in view by Reynolds and his anti-Benton friends. The effect upon politics was considered at every step taken in this correspondence. Unwritten rules of the code were observed in the composition. Every sentence was scrutinized and passed upon by men who were experts in duelling practice.

If Brown wrote first drafts of his letters and then made revised copies to be sent to Reynolds, the correspondence as preserved in the Bixby collection does not establish it. Brown's letters contain very few alterations. They were written upon blue note paper in a fine hand and usually on both sides of the sheet, when of considerable length.

Brown  
Preserved  
No  
Original  
Drafts

The rather surprising fact about the original draft of the demand of apology by Reynolds is that the endorsement by Linn, with the hour of delivery, appears at the bottom of the page. As a rule Reynolds crossed out and interlined the original draft so that it showed exactly the text of what his seconds delivered. In this case he did not do so, but the endorsement of Linn was placed upon the imperfect draft the same as on the amended "official" copy.

Under the code a "friend," in delivering a communication to the opposing principal, had authority to represent his principal in any modification of the text. If the other principal objected to some part of the letter handed to him, and gave what, to the second, seemed a good reason for the suggested change, the second had power to "withdraw" the word, or phrase, or sentence, without taking the letter back to his own principal. This power was exercised in the course of the Brown-Reynolds controversies. A memorandum was made on the bottom of the page by the second to the effect that certain words quoted had been withdrawn. No such note, however, appears on the demand of apology. The omission of part of the original draft is left without explanation.

The letter of March 21st, in which Reynolds transmitted his "verbal" challenge, illustrates the extent to which revision was carried in the correspondence on his part. Reynolds first wrote:

Whether there is any attempt to "dictate and bully" on my part, I am willing to leave to the impartial decision of all who may read my note of yesterday and the matters which gave rise to it. As to "avoiding proceeding in the usual manner to ascertain the name of the author of the communication by which I conceive myself to be aggrieved," I will only remark that there is nothing in my note which entitled you to say that I considered myself "aggrieved" by the communication universally attributed to and evidently written or suggested by a person who, whatever the intercourse permissible with him in business or in politics, has long ago placed himself beyond the pale of gentlemen, by suffering himself on one occasion to be called a coward to his face, on another has been knocked down and on a third (to my own knowledge) has been given the lie to his face without ever having in any way resented any of these insults.

How  
Reynolds  
Revised  
His First  
Drafts

*the coward (whoever he may be in this case) who conceals his lies under the garb of an anonymous libeller, and hold to his responsibility, the editor, who alone has given effect to the venom of the correspondent, by publishing his remarks. In this case you have done more; you have based your editorial of yesterday on an assumption of their truthfulness.*

*You "decline any withdrawal of your editorials until first satisfied of their inaccuracy or injustice." You thus clearly intimate you still deem them "accurate" and "just" and refuse reparation.*

*It only remains for me to send you a message which the bearer of this, Mr. W. A. Linn, will verbally deliver to your friend, Capt. Frost, and he has full authority to act for me in the matter.*

*I am, sir,*

*Your obedient servant,*

*Thomas C. Reynolds.*

## IX

### BROWN INVITES THE CHALLENGE "IN WRITING"

ST. LOUIS, March 22nd, 1855

*Thos. C. Reynolds, Esq.*

*Sir:*

*Your note of the 21st inst. has been received, to which I have the following reply to make:*

*In your first letter to me you saw proper to make a false issue by assuming that I had adopted a certain communication published in the Democrat of the 17th inst. In your second note, you assume additionally what you cannot know to be true, that the author of that communication is a coward and therefore you have the right to pass him by and hold me responsible as the editor of the paper in which the communication appeared. I do not intend to permit you to make a false issue with me; nor do I intend to permit you to bully me with impunity. I have therefore taken the trouble to expose your attempt to rest your demand upon an untruthful assumption in order that I may be justified in repelling your evident bravado. Having put this matter in its proper light and shown up the manner in which you have sought to force a difficulty upon me as well as to place me in a false attitude, I now stand ready to meet you upon the real issue in this case, and I assure you that I have no more intention of permitting you to browbeat me than I have of permitting you to place me in the wrong, and therefore whenever you desire to make a further communication in writing, you will not find me unwilling to respond to your satisfaction.*

*[Endorsed: Rec'd, 25 minutes  
after 12 o'clock, 22d March, '55.]*

*Yours very respectfully,*

*B. Gratz Brown.*

THE EXPLANATORY NARRATIVE

All of this reference to the "Anti-Know Nothing" correspondent of the *Democrat* was cut out. The letter giving notice of the "verbal" challenge was confined strictly to Brown as editor of the *Democrat*. It is altogether probable that Reynolds' friends advised him to pay no more attention to "Anti-Know Nothing" and to bring his controversy with Brown to an immediate issue. In order to make the letter read as officially delivered, Reynolds had to erase and interline the original draft until it could be read only with difficulty.

Seconds had varied functions. They were more than messengers and witnesses. Their powers extended far beyond the arrangement of minor details. This is seen in the correspondence of the three controversies between Brown and Reynolds. The challenge having been sent and accepted, the next "friends" became the managers of the affair. They disputed and argued about terms. In the second controversy, the seconds took up and carried through the discussion on the important question of distance. The letters exchanged by D. M. Frost and W. A. Linn are among the most interesting of the series. They were written with earnestness and emphasis. They brought out precedents which had been established, they developed the fine points in the practice of the code up to that time.

Functions  
of Seconds  
Varied and  
Important

Captain Frost was of New York nativity, a graduate of West Point, having been a student at the Military Academy when Grant was there. After the Mexican war, Frost resigned his commission in the regular army. He married a daughter of Major Graham, a granddaughter of John Mullanphy, and made his residence in St. Louis. About 1853 he began to take an active part in St. Louis politics. In 1854, the year before he was second to Brown, Captain Frost was elected to the State Senate. He identified himself with the Benton Democrats, but advanced and supported with vigor a policy of his own. He saw the political situation from a military point of view. It was his belief that trouble of serious character between the North and the South was impending, that with thorough militia organization in the border States the balance of military power could be maintained sufficiently effective to prevent armed conflict between the North and the South. In a certain sense this military view of Frost harmonized with Benton's political policy to keep down slavery agitation. Frost devoted his time and experience and influence in the legislature to obtain measures which would organize extensively the militia of the State. Brown aided Frost not a little in this legislation. Frost corresponded with former army officers and others in the border States to bring about action similar to that of Missouri. He hoped to create along the length of Mason and Dixon's line a military barrier which neither section could pass to attack the other.

Captain  
Frost  
and His  
Peace  
Policy

## X

## REYNOLDS DENOUNCES THE CORRESPONDENT

ST. LOUIS, Mo., 22d March, 1855

*B. Gratz Brown, Esq.**Sir:**Your note of to-day is received.**I disavow any design other than to obtain legitimate and fair redress for the wrong of attributing a false oath to a man of (as I feel I can justly claim to be) unblemished character, and further insulting me; which of us has commenced or adopted the "bullying" tone in this controversy, I am content that others shall determine.**My terming your correspondent a "coward" is a cap which you can hand over to him to try on, if you choose; but my right to pass him by and call on you, is independent of the fact whether he is one or not. Did not internal and external evidence clearly point out as its author, a notorious poltroon of this city, I should suppose him otherwise from the anxiety you show to avoid your own responsibility, perhaps forever, by fastening on him a quarrel with me. There is, I will remark, nothing to preclude my noticing him, after the more important controversy with yourself is disposed of.**I have not objected (though I had a right so to do), to the extraordinary use to which you have put this correspondence, in framing your notes in an offensive style. I shall leave them to "show up" whichever of the parties may have failed in his duty as a gentleman, to himself and to others, and to disclose whether you have not given unprovoked and uncalled for insults, and on a mild and courteous demand of redress, first endeavor to fix a quarrel on another and, foiled in that design, now add insults to those already given, and in a clap-trap editorial style, with false premises and falser logic, endeavor to make yourself appear an "injured innocent," pursued by a bully of a man, who yet has lived five years in this community without even a passing difference with any one, except yourself.**As you are so punctilious as to object to receiving verbally the message sent you through Mr. Linn on yesterday, I now send it in writing, but for obvious reasons, in a separate note.**I am, sir,**Your obedient servant,**Thomas C. Reynolds.*

THE EXPLANATORY NARRATIVE

After the enactment of the legislation in which he was largely instrumental, Frost was made brigadier-general and commander of the first military district of Missouri. In compliance with this militia law annual encampments were held. In 1860 the camping place for the first military district was the Fair Grounds at St. Louis. In 1861 Frost assembled the militia organizations of the district near the intersection of Pine Street and Grand Avenue. The place was named Camp Jackson, in honor of the governor of Missouri. On the 10th of May Captain Lyon, with a small force of regulars and several regiments of volunteers recruited in St. Louis, marched from the arsenal, surrounded Camp Jackson and compelled surrender of the State troops to the United States authority. Brown was active on the Federal side in that affair. Frost subsequently went into the Confederate army.

W. A. Linn was known among intimate friends as "Gus." Linn. He was a relative of Dr. Linn, who, some years before, had been a United States Senator from Missouri. For a considerable period W. A. Linn held the Federal office of surveyor and inspector of customs. He resided at the Planters; he was active in Democratic politics.

Dr. Linn was called "the model senator." He was the handsomest Missourian of his day, according to his friends. His manners were considered perfect. The impression which he made upon his fellow senators at Washington is illustrated by the story told that when Senator Linn arose one time in the Senate with a roll of bills which he wished to present, Senator Buchanan interrupted with, "Doctor, we will save you the trouble if you recommend them; we will pass the whole bundle."

The  
Model  
Senator  
of  
Missouri

At another time Senator Linn arose in the midst of a heated political discussion and proceeded with all of his splendid dignity to correct a statement made by Henry Clay. The latter listened with deference and accepted the correction with, "It is sufficient that it comes from the senator from Missouri."

Upon the monument which marks the grave of Linn in the Ste. Genevieve cemetery is graven, "Here lie the remains of Lewis F. Linn, the model senator of Missouri."

Dr. Linn was not without experience in the code. As a surgeon he was present when Biddle and Pettis inflicted fatal wounds upon each other. As senator he took a prominent part in the debate upon the legislation suggested by the death of Cilley. What he said was especially interesting because he cited Missouri illustrations to sustain his arguments. Senator Linn urged that too drastic legislation would defeat the purpose.

What community could be found, he asked, that would pronounce a man either a murderer or a felon, who might have chanced to kill another in fair and equal combat? No man, he was persuaded, who came to act on his responsibility as a juror, would be

## XI

## THE CHALLENGE IN WRITING

ST. LOUIS, March 22d, 1855

B. Gratz Brown, Esq.

Sir:

*Your notes are not only insufficient, but offensive. I ask the proper atonement. My friend, Mr. W. A. Linn, is authorized to act for me.*

*I am, sir,*

*Your obedient servant,*

*Thomas C. Reynolds.*

## XII

## BROWN ACCEPTS AND NAMES HIS SECOND

ST. LOUIS, March 22nd, 1855

Thos. C. Reynolds, Esq.

Sir:

*Your two notes of this date have been received, one containing a challenge and the other an attempt at its justification. I shall certainly accede to your demand for satisfaction, although I shall not permit you to place that demand upon false ground and therefore see proper to expose the positions which you have chosen, first to assume, and then to abandon in the progress of this correspondence. Whether or not you can rightly appreciate the feelings with which a gentleman enters into a controversy of this nature, and whether you have mistaken my motives in not permitting you to falsify my position or to place me in the wrong, when you urge in your note, as one of your pretexts, my anxiety to avoid my own responsibility "perhaps forever" by fastening upon you a quarrel with another, is a matter that I must leave to your own calm consideration. I have no disposition to take issue with you upon that point, and therefore have nothing further to say in regard to it. It is sufficient that I first place myself right; consequences are matters of secondary consideration.*

*In your first note, you saw proper to assign as the basis of your hostile communication that I had adopted in an editorial in my paper,*

## THE EXPLANATORY NARRATIVE

prepared to render such a verdict. Many of the States had passed severe penal enactments in relation to this matter, and yet where was the State where such laws had been carried into effect? Other legislatures had sought milder remedies, such as punishing duelling by disfranchising their citizens, rendering them forever after incapable of holding offices of profit or trust, honor or emolument; such laws, he maintained, had a more wholesome action than those unjust and cruel enactments, because the one was generally carried into effect, while the other was little better than a dead letter. To illustrate the effect of public opinion on this subject, Mr. Linn instanced a case in his own State, where the people were as much averse to fighting as those of any other in the Union (though he was aware that a contrary opinion prevailed among many in relation to Missouri), where a small man, for a supposed offense, was cruelly lashed by a large one, the result of which was a challenge on the part of the small one to fight, in which duel the large man was shot twice, the last wound mortal. The survivor was found guilty under the laws of Missouri, when a petition was gotten up, signed almost unanimously by the people, and presented to the legislature, which body remitted the penalties almost by acclamation; and so, Mr. Linn said, it would be in all like cases—either the legislature or the executive would step in to counteract the law. If such a bill could be introduced as would strike at the root of the evil, it would cheerfully have his support. He was aware that duelling was not defensible on principles of Christianity. All the legislatures of the Union have concurred in denouncing the practice of duelling as evil in itself, and yet have we not seen them come in to stay the law? From what little he had seen it appeared to him that fighting was like marrying—the more barriers that were erected against it, the surer were they to come together.

Missouri  
Duels  
Cited  
to the  
Senate

Farther along in the debate, Mr. Linn again held up Missouri experience for the enlightenment of the United States Senate. He said they had now a law in his State which was more effectual for the prevention of duelling than any other law that had ever been passed. In cases of assault, all abusive words and defamatory language went to the jury in mitigation of the offense.

A  
Missouri  
Lesson  
for the  
Nation

Mr. Benton—As a justification?

Mr. Linn—Yes sir, as a justification; and if that abusive member, the tongue, was permitted to have too free a license, the same license was permitted to the individual to redress his grievance. He thought if the same law was applied to the Senate of the United States, there would be a little more decorum than he had sometimes witnessed. This law, of which he had spoken, had had a better effect in the prevention of duelling than any other that had ever been passed, and he thought it would be better for the peace and harmony of society if such a law was more generally prevalent throughout the United States.

The reference in Senator Linn's remarks to a Missouri case was undoubtedly to the Leonard-Berry fatality. In 1819 a slender Vermont youth walked from St. Charles to Old Franklin, near Boonville. He carried all that he possessed in a bundle at the end of a stick. One of these possessions was a license to practice law. While the young New Englander was gaining a professional foothold in Missouri he had a difficulty with Major Taylor Berry, who struck him with a whip. The impression in the community was that the Yankee would not fight a duel. Leonard wrote at once to Berry: "Sir, I demand a

*an article which was communicated to the same on the 17th inst. That assumption was shown to be groundless. In your second note, you saw proper to assume that the author of the communication at which you took offense, was a coward. My reply very justly pointed out to you that that assumption was unwarranted, and yet you now take it upon yourself to characterize the author of that communication as a "poltroon," without ever having demanded the name in order to inform yourself as to the fact of his responsibility. In your third note you see proper to state that I have charged you with having taken a false oath, and you also disavow any design other than to obtain redress for this last grievance. This assumption is equally as unwarranted as any which has preceded it, and the tardiness with which the discovery of this last assumed cause of complaint has been made, sufficiently proves such to be the case.*

*From all these circumstances, as well as from the language and general tenor of your letters, I am convinced of your determination to force a collision with me, and am therefore constrained to gratify your unjustifiable caprice. I will refer you for all further arrangements to my friend, Capt. D. M. Frost, who is authorized to act for me in the premises.*

*Yours very respectfully,  
B. Gratz Brown.*

### XIII

#### RIFLES, AT EIGHTY YARDS

ST. LOUIS, MO., March 23d, 1855

W. A. Linn, Esqr.

D'r Sir:

*I have the honor to inform you that my principal, Mr. B. Gratz Brown, in accepting the challenge of Thos. C. Reynolds, Esqr., has chosen as the weapons to be used in settling the difficulty between them, the Common American Rifle with open sights, round ball, not over one ounce. Each gentleman to select his own weapon of the kind above named. He has also chosen eighty yards as the distance, and will on Sunday next arrange as to time and place.*

*I am, sir,  
Very respectfully,  
Your ob't serv't,  
D. M. Frost.*

[Endorsed: Rec'd 2 o'clock,  
March 25, '55.]

Saint Louis Mo

March 23<sup>rd</sup> 1855-

Mr. A. Linn Esq. St. Louis

I have the honor to inform you that my friend -  
- Capt. Mr. W. Henry Watson, an ardent  
- being the challenger of Thos. C. Reynolds  
- Esq; has chosen as the weapons to be  
used in settling the difficulty between  
them, the Common American Rifle  
with open sight <sup>the distance to be 100 yds</sup> Each gentleman to  
select his own weapon if he kind choose  
named. He has also chosen Eighty Yards  
as the distance, and will on Sunday  
- next. arrange as to time and place -

I am. Sir

Very Respectfully  
Your Wm. Smith  
Wm. Smith

Recd 2 o'clock  
March 25<sup>th</sup> 1855



THE EXPLANATORY NARRATIVE

personal interview with you. My friend, Mr. Boggs, will make the necessary arrangements."

The challenge was sent on the 26th of June, 1824. Berry accepted. He named Major A. L. Langham as his friend. In accepting, he wrote: "My business, which embraces many duties to others, will require my personal attention until after the 1st of September, next, after which time any further delay will be asked from you only."

The  
Leonard-  
Berry  
Fatal  
Meeting

The principals and their seconds traveled down the Missouri to St. Louis and thence to New Madrid. The time set for the duel was the first of September. Berry was mortally wounded. Under the constitution of Missouri Leonard was disfranchised and disbarred. Long petitions for the removal of his disabilities were signed and sent to the legislature. At the next session Leonard was restored to all of his rights. Ten years later he was elected to the legislature. Subsequently he became a justice of the Supreme Court of Missouri.

Frost's letter to Linn on the 23d of March, giving the conditions to govern in the meeting, underwent change after being written. "The common American rifle with open sights" was the original composition. After the letter was written the words "round ball, not over one ounce," were interlined. Both Reynolds and his second in subsequent correspondence declared the rifle was "barbarous" and generally excluded under the code.

"Round  
Ball, not  
Over One  
Ounce"

Weapons and distance which Brown chose in accepting the challenge of Reynolds were almost identical with the terms in the Cilley-Graves case. Next to the fatal meeting between Aaron Burr and Alexander Hamilton no other duel so shocked the American nation as that between the two Congressmen in 1838. Cilley was from Maine; Graves was from Kentucky. Cilley's offending was a speech reflecting upon Webb, the editor of the *New York Courier*. Graves carried a challenge from Webb. Cilley refused to accept it. Graves concluded that the code required him to take up the quarrel of his principal. Cilley accepted the challenge of Graves and made the conditions rifles at eighty yards. On the fourth exchange of shots Cilley was shot through the heart. The meeting took place a few miles out of Washington at the hour of the usual daily assembling of Congress. The seconds gave out a statement that the meeting was "regulated by magnanimous principles and laws of humanity."

Reynolds  
Appre-  
hended  
Inter-  
ference

The "obvious reasons" which prompted Reynolds to send the challenge in verbal form to Brown had reference to the Missouri law against duelling, as the letter of March 23d explained. That letter was sent through Linn and Frost to Brown and then returned through the seconds to the writer of it.

## XIV

## MEMORANDUM IN HANDWRITING OF REYNOLDS

*We wish no unnecessary delay. Capt. Frost can choose the time of departure, giving reasonable notice; if Monday selected, pledge not to practice rifles will be given; rifles objected to; Mr. Reynolds unused to the weapon and near-sighted; if insisted on, we exercise our right of shortening distance to twenty paces, if Captain Frost will take the responsibility of insisting on rifles.*

## XV

## REYNOLDS DEMANDS SHORTER DISTANCE

St. Louis, Mo., 23d March, 1855

B. Gratz Brown, Esq.

Sir:

*Had your note, received to-day, been confined to an acceptance, it would have closed this correspondence, but I cannot leave unnoticed your gratuitous assertion that I am "forcing a collision" with you. The facts of the case are simply these and all your declamation cannot change them.*

*Without the slightest provocation, you permitted my private affairs to be discussed in a highly improper tone, in your paper. I passed that by, as I usually do anonymous communications. You then noticed, in an editorial headed, "Is it perjury or is it not?" those same private affairs, asserted your correspondent to have furnished "a true copy" of a public record, and that in it I "swore" to a statement, which you informed your readers you had editorially published evidence to prove untrue. I considered this an adoption of your correspondent's statements, and (the offensiveness of your editorial being so plain as to dispense with any inquiry), I called on "your sense of gentlemanly propriety" for redress. You answered by denying that my assumption was warranted by the facts, and, instead of resting your defense on that, you coupled it with the highly offensive charge that the assumption was not an error, but a pretext, in bad faith, to avoid calling on your correspondent. To this new insult, you added a clearly implied and offensively expressed re-assertion of the accuracy and justice of your editorial, and perverted my call on your sense of propriety into an attempt to "dictate" and "bully" and make a "false issue," and this*

THE EXPLANATORY NARRATIVE

According to an English writer, "the first notorious duel that was fought in America" was among the Puritans. It occurred in 1630. The principals were Edward Doty and Edward Leinster. Each was armed with a sword in the right hand and a dagger in the left. Both were wounded, one in the hand, the other in the thigh. Sentiment in Plymouth Colony strongly condemned duelling. Governor Bradford made an example of Doty and Leinster. He condemned them to have their hands and feet tied together and to lie in that condition a day and a night without food or drink. In an hour the duellists begged so piteously for relief that on promise of good behavior they were released.

Massachusetts began to legislate in 1797 against duelling, depriving any principal of all his political rights for twenty years. Tennessee, New York and other States adopted anti-duelling laws. Virginia required all officials to take oath they would not engage in duelling during their terms. Missouri was not a laggard in this respect, as perhaps might be supposed from the frequency of the meetings on Bloody Island. As early as 1814 the Territory of Missouri legislated against duelling. The State legislature of 1822 passed an act making death from a duel murder and prohibiting from office holding all who engaged in it. The preamble to this law declared:

"Experience has evinced that the existing remedy for the suppression of the barbarous custom of duelling is inadequate to the purpose and the progress and consequences of the evil have become so destructive as to require an effort on the part of the general assembly to arrest a vice, the result of ignorance and barbarism, justified neither by the precepts of morality nor by the dictates of reason."

Missouri  
Legisla-  
tion  
Against  
Duelling

Three fatal duels within a year prompted this strong expression by the law-making body of the new State of Missouri.

During the administration of Governor Frederick Bates, 1824-5, the Missouri legislature made another attempt to stop the practice of duelling. A bill was passed providing that duellists be punished at the whipping post. Governor Bates exercised the veto power, it is said, for the first time in the history of the State. His message was a denunciation of the code, but he objected to the form of punishment: "I am happy to record my utter detestation and abhorrence of duelling. My duty to my neighbors and myself would compel me, if possible, to put down so barbarous and so impious a practice."

The legislature did not pass the bill over the veto.

Illinois put a stop to duelling between citizens of that State at an early day, but did not seriously interfere with Missourians. In 1819, Alonzo C. Stuart and William Bennett fought at Belleville. The seconds conspired to prevent bloodshed and loaded the rifles without bullets. As his weapon was handed to Bennett he slipped in a bullet. Stuart was mortally wounded.

*you did in a tone calculated, if not designed, to lead to anything, but explanations from me. In reply, I referred to my previous letter to show I had no design to "bully" or "dictate." I placed on grounds well known to every gentleman and unquestionably tenable, my refusal to notice your correspondent in the way you desired, and, without in any way recriminating on you for your imputations on my motives, asked that redress, which was to be resorted to only after a call on your sense of propriety had failed. In answer, you misrepresented my position, dodged the fact that I asked of you redress, not only for your endorsement of your correspondent (not for his article itself), but also for your editorial, which is still, neither explained nor withdrawn, and in doing this, you again attacked my motives in the most offensive manner. I therefore distinctly disavowed all intention to bully or dictate, and in repelling your extraordinary charges, used language, which was, at least, not more unusual than your own. To this you now reply with a re-hash of your former charges and additional insults, and you plainly disclose the character of the invitation, which you insisted on having in writing. Your motives for so insisting, and then disclosing, I cannot fathom; I trust they have no connection with the "obvious reasons," stated by Mr. Linn to your friend, Capt. Frost, for a different course, and which are easy to be surmised by any one familiar with the Revised Statutes of Missouri.*

*You have defined your position, but you are careful to omit all mention of the main fact in this correspondence, and one which throws light on your motives in inviting this controversy, viz., that in none of your notes have you offered to confront me or my friend with even the slightest shade of proof that the oath you mention ever was taken, although you have asserted it to be a public record, accessible to all, and that you had a "true copy" of it before you.*

*These plain statements constitute my rejoinder to your last note. Whether I am a "bully" can be judged of from my whole course of life, by this community, which also may have noticed with what forbearance (out of respect to that freedom, and even license, of the press which is a wholesome check on public officers) I treated, perhaps unwisely, your attacks last spring on my official conduct, as U. S. District Attorney, as long as you did not extend your strictures to my private or political conduct. My motives on the present occasion I leave to be judged of by others, from your whole course and mine; perhaps the only feeling which I am anxious they should not attribute to me is a disposition tamely to submit to the arrogance of a man who seems to think that when he rakes up private affairs, and charges false oaths, the party aggrieved must*

THE EXPLANATORY NARRATIVE

Bennett was tried for murder and convicted. Appeals to Governor Bond for clemency were without avail. Bennett was hung. Some Illinois historians have claimed that that was the first and last duel fought within the State by its citizens and that the execution of Bennett made the practice unpopular. But Illinois did not consider that its jurisdiction extended to Bloody Island.

Thomas H. Benton was concerned in the affair at Belleville. He defended the two seconds. Public sentiment was so strongly aroused that indictments were returned against the seconds, who were Jacob Short and Nathan Fike. The duel took place in February, at a time when there was a large gathering in Belleville from the surrounding country. It was arranged apparently to test the courage of Bennett. The testimony went to show an understanding on the part of all but Bennett that the duel was a sham. The place selected was a lot just north of the main street of the town. The weapons were rifles and the loading was done by the seconds. The principals were stationed forty yards apart. Stuart did not fire. After he fell his rifle was picked up by one of the seconds and discharged. Stuart was a man of some prominence in St. Clair County. Benton secured the acquittal of Short and Fike. The trial brought out testimony to the effect that Bennett had put a bullet in his gun after receiving it from the second. Bennett had been arrested and was in jail. When the sheriff went to bring him to court for trial he could not be found. In some manner he had escaped from the jail and had reached the Missouri side of the river. Two years later he was caught, tried, convicted and executed. Judge John R. Reynolds, before whom the three men were tried, in an account of the affair, wrote that it "was considered the result of a wild, drunken frolic; and it never did assume the character of a regular and honorable duel."

Benton  
Defended  
Duellists  
at  
Belleville

The Rev. Timothy Flint in one of his letters to his brother in Massachusetts gave a different version of the Belleville duel. His account was written not long after the tragedy:

A young gentleman, a respectable attorney, had just commenced business. He had been bullied by a man who was indeed an officer in rank, but a dubious character. The young gentleman had been cautioned against being drawn into the contest, and had been assured, that, according to the orthodox canons of honor, the character of the man did not justify fighting him. But an idea was entertained that he had not sufficient nerve to stand a challenge. It was agreed by his friends that the next time the man insulted him, he should send him a challenge and that the seconds should load both rifles—for they were to fight with rifles—with blank cartridges. The opposite party was not to be in the secret and the joke was to watch his eye and see if it did not blench. The challenge was sent and the seconds on both sides made a solemn contract with each other that both guns should be loaded with blank cartridges. The young attorney went out to watch

Another  
Version  
of the  
Bennett  
Affair

*humbly bow before his editorial tripod and beg for the withdrawal of the accusation; and who, when respectfully approached, answers only with insults, and at every step "writes himself" deeper and deeper into a collision, which a sense of common decency might have prevented all occasion for.*

*I consider the rifle, which you have named as the weapon, to be unusual and barbarous, and generally excluded by gentlemen; with this protest, as you leave me no choice, I accept it and exercise the right (which I have absolutely) to shorten the distance from eighty paces to twenty. To show you that I do so, not from caprice, but necessity, I assure you, and it is a notorious fact, that I am so near-sighted that I am unable, even with my glasses, in ordinary weather to recognize any person except an intimate friend, at a greater distance than thirty paces; and as you have the right to name the time of day for the meeting, I cannot safely consent to a greater distance than twenty. I hope that in selecting a distance of eighty paces, you were ignorant of my defective eyesight, and that you did not knowingly propose terms on which you, accustomed to the rifle, could shoot me down with perfect safety to yourself.*

*I am, sir,*

*Your obedient servant,*

*Thomas C. Reynolds.*

[Returned by Capt. D. M. Frost at 2 o'clock,  
March 25, 1855—W. A. Linn.]

## XVI

### A CONFIDENTIAL WARNING

(Private)

*Monday morning.*

*I called this morning, hoping to see Mr. L. and yourself, as he called to see me last evening.*

*It is highly important to your friend that you now pursue a proper, dignified and gentlemanly course. A violent one will lead to an O'Blenis scene, and will result, you may rest assured, most inevitably in involving Mr. L. and Capt. F. in difficulty. But all I wish to say now is that you should restrain your own impulses and not decide on any course until (after) a free and full consultation with all y'r friends. Your present position is impregnable and you should do nothing to show a want of confidence in it.*

*I am compelled to be at my office this morning, but w'd be able to see you and Mr. L. there, or if it will answer, I will be at y'r office at half past one o'clock.*

*Yours truly,*

*T. P. A.*

[Mr. Reynolds (present).]

St. Louis Mo 24. March 1835.

Capt. Frank B Gatz Brown Esq

Sir

~~My friends & myself~~ I consider the rifle which you have named as the weapon, to be an unusual and barbarous, and ~~for a long time~~ <sup>as you leave me no choice, I accept it</sup> generally excluded by gentlemen; with this protest, ~~and~~ <sup>(which I have absolutely)</sup> exercise ~~my~~ <sup>the</sup> right, to shorten the distance from eighty paces to twenty to show you that I ~~exercise this right~~ <sup>do so</sup> not from caprice but necessity, ~~I assure you, that I am so near-sighted~~ <sup>with my glasses, in ordinary weather, to recognize</sup> that I am unable to ~~discern~~ <sup>recognize</sup> any person except an intimate friend, at a greater distance than thirty paces, and as you have the right to name the ~~time of day for the~~ <sup>place of meet-</sup> ing, I cannot <sup>safely</sup> consent to a greater distance than twenty; If you desire it, ample proof of my near-sightedness can be given you. I ~~suppose~~ <sup>hope</sup> that in selecting a distance of eighty paces, you ~~must have been~~ <sup>were</sup> ignorant of my defective eye-sight, ~~or you would not~~ <sup>that you did not know</sup> ~~have~~ <sup>high</sup> proposed terms, on which you, accustomed to the rifle, could shoot ~~at~~ <sup>down</sup> me, when I should with perfect safety to yourself

I am, Sir. your obedient servant  
Thomas C. Reynolds.



THE EXPLANATORY NARRATIVE

the eye of his antagonist and to enjoy the joke. The parties met, discharged and the attorney fell with two rifle bullets through his heart. The wretch who was second for his antagonist had violated his stipulation and had loaded the rifle with two bullets. An amiable young woman was left a widow with one orphan babe.

Colonel T. P. Andrews was one of those with whom Reynolds consulted as the correspondence progressed. Evidently from the "Monday morning" note he addressed to Reynolds, he feared that instead of leading by careful observance of the niceties of the code to a "proper, dignified and gentlemanly" duel, this controversy might end in a disgraceful "scene." Recently St. Louis had passed through a period of great excitement over a shooting affair in which Robert Mc. O'Brien had been the aggressor. O'Brien was interested in one of the omnibus lines which ante-dated street cars in St. Louis. He was commonly called "Bob" O'Brien, was a hail-fellow-well-met about town, and by a later generation would have been dubbed "a dead game sport." O'Brien was in the Planters' House bar taking a drink when a steamboatman named Brand entered. O'Brien insisted that Brand drink with him. Brand refused. O'Brien drew his pistol and fired. He was indicted for murder. The best that Richard H. Blennerhassett, the eloquent criminal lawyer of that day, could do for his client was to get him off with a ten years' sentence in the penitentiary. Colonel Andrews had in view the state of the public mind when he urged Reynolds to exercise self control.

The  
O'Brien  
Case

Lorenzo Sabine's "Notes on Duels and Duelling" was published in 1855. The author explained that the Notes were "simply the results of common and everyday reading, observation and conversation, for a series of years, in this particular direction." He was "much impressed with the fact that most duels grow out of trifles." Setting forth the motive which inspired his work, he said he "would humbly cherish the belief that the influence of these tales of blood and crime will be to lessen the number of single combats between persons who may rightfully claim the appellation of gentleman, and so do something to advance the great cause of human brotherhood."

Sabine became an authority, and his Notes were accepted as a text-book on duelling. A copy was added to the collection of the Mercantile Library of St. Louis about the time of publication. Its condition shows that it has been consulted from motives other than those of the casual reader. Passages are marked. Pages have been thumbed. Remarkable to tell, the marked sentences and paragraphs are almost without exception those which have bearing on the technical points in controversy between Brown and Reynolds and their seconds. The precedents created in cases where one of the principals was "near-sighted" are pencil-marked in the book, as if the second for Reynolds had cited these passages to the second

Sabine  
the  
Authority

## XVII

## THE SECONDS ARGUE ON DISTANCE

ST. LOUIS, March 25th, 1855

Capt. D. M. Frost.

Dear Sir:

*Have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your note of the 23d; also the return of my principal's note of the same date. As time is important, I will not now discuss the propriety or justice of returning the note of my principal, or of your principal's assuming the right which we deny, of closing a correspondence at his pleasure, but proceed to bring to your notice the important and indispensable part of it, which asserts his acknowledged right (as we conceive) to shorten the distance to twenty paces, on the ground, now known to you, of his utter incapacity to distinguish a person, from short-sightedness, at any greater distance. Your agreement to that distance (twenty paces) is the object of this note, to which I ask your immediate attention.*

With great respect,

Your ob't s'v't,

W. A. Linn.

## XVIII

## CUSTOM OF THE ANGLO-SAXON RACE

ST. LOUIS, Mo., March 25th, 1855

W. A. Linn, Esq.

Dear Sir:

*In reply to your note of this date, I have the honor to state that I disagree with you entirely as regards the rights and customs of gentlemen in settling an affair of honor.*

*I claim for my principal the undoubted right of choosing weapons and distance, and this claim is most certainly sanctioned by the custom of the Anglo-Saxon race.*

*I shall therefore adhere to the weapon and distance as fixed on Saturday last and of which I then informed you.*

I am, sir,

Very respectfully,

Your obd't serv't,

D. M. Frost.

THE EXPLANATORY NARRATIVE

for Brown in their argument about the distance when Reynolds asserted defective vision. One of these quotations is a sentence from a speech of Ben. Hardin before a Kentucky convention in 1850, reading:

"Did I not know, while in Washington, Barron and Decatur, two of the first men of that period in America, come up in mortal array within sixteen feet of each other, because one was near-sighted, and the rule was that both should take deliberate sight before the word to fire was given?"

Two  
Near-  
sighted  
Prece-  
dents

The Pettis-Biddle duel, one of the three St. Louis meetings which fastened upon the locality the title of "Bloody Island," is described by Sabine, and these words are scored by pencil:

"Biddle was the challenged party, and, being near-sighted, stipulated a distance of five feet, with pistols. Their weapons, in position, actually overlapped each other."

Sabine mentions as "well established" certain points of practice by American duellists, and the St. Louisans consulting the copy of his book found in the Mercantile Library, have marked the following:

"Again, it seems to be well settled that the challenged, in the matters of weapons, time and distance, shall be governed by usage between gentlemen."

Having entered upon a study of the fine points of duelling by consultation of Sabine's Notes, the seconds of Brown and Reynolds, it appears, were quite thorough. In 1777 "gentlemen delegates of Tipperary, Galway, Mayo, Sligo and Roscommon" met at Clonmel Summer Assizes and "prescribed for general adoption throughout Ireland" a code of laws "for the government of duellists." The rules, of which there were thirty-six, were called in Galway "the thirty-six commandments." They were known also as "the Galway articles." Sabine incorporated most of these rules in his Notes. Two of the rules are marked in a manner similar to the other parts of the book which were cited by the seconds of Brown and Reynolds in their conferences and correspondence on the terms of that meeting. The two "commandments" thus marked in the book are:

The  
Galway  
Command-  
ments

RULE 14. Seconds to be of equal rank in society with the principals they attend, inasmuch as a second may either choose or chance to become a principal, and equality is indispensable.

RULE 16. The challenged has the right to choose his own weapon, unless the challenger gives his honor he is no swordsman; after which, however, he cannot decline any second species of weapon proposed by the challenged.

The "Galway Articles" were formed as rules for the conduct of duels. They made the lie and the blow the chief offenses calling for satisfaction under the code. One of the rules was that no apology could be received after the principals had taken their ground, until an exchange of fires. Another rule

## XIX

## LINN DECLINES THE TERMS

ST. LOUIS, March 25th, 1855

Capt. D. M. Frost.

Dear Sir:

*I have received your note of this evening refusing to shorten the distance to twenty paces. Without consultation with my principal (who is at a distance), I consider it my duty, to decline being a participant, in any manner, to a meeting in which your principal, who is of good sight, has selected a weapon with which he is supposed to be skilled, and refuses to shorten the distance with an opponent who certainly could not distinguish a man at half of the distance insisted on. I should feel myself inexcusable to take part at such an unequal combat; and that the strong excuses or justification in support of the practice of duelling—reasonable equality,—would be violated. Differing so essentially on these points, I have only to conclude by informing you that all further agency, on my part, ceases with this reply.*

*With great respect,**Your ob't sv't,*

W. A. Linn.

## XX

## FROST CITES THE GRAVES-CILLEY PRECEDENT

ST. LOUIS, Mo., March 26th, 1855

W. A. Linn, Esq.

Dear Sir:

*Your note of last evening is received and in reply to it, I beg leave to say that on Friday last, after informing you of the weapon and distance to be used in settling the controversy between Mr. Brown and Mr. Reynolds, our respective principals, I remarked to you that I had a copy of the correspondence between Graves and Cilley, with the rules adopted in settling their difficulty, whereupon you immediately suggested that we should adopt the same to govern us. In reply to your suggestion, I stated that I had not read over the rules referred to, but had no doubt, from the high character of all the parties engaged in that affair, that we should find them correct in all the main principles, yet that it might be necessary to vary them slightly to suit the present case; and you then remarked that we would have no difficulty, but would agree between ourselves upon the minor details.*

St Louis

March 23<sup>rd</sup> 1835

Capt. V. M. Frost

Mr Sir

I have received your note of this evening, refusing to shorten the distance to twenty paces. Without consultation with my principal, (who is at a distance) I consider it my duty, to decline being a participant, in any manner, to a meeting in which your principal, who is of good sight, has selected a weapon with which he is supposed to be skilled, & refuses to shorten the distance with an opponent who certainly could not distinguish a man at half of the distance insisted on. I should feel myself incalculable to take part in such an unequal combat; and that the strong excuses, or justification, in support of the practice, duelling - reasonable equality - would be evaded. Differing so essentially on these points, I have only to conclude by informing you that all further agency, on my part, ceases with this reply.

With great Respect,

Your obt Servt

W. A. Linn



THE EXPLANATORY NARRATIVE

gave the challenged the right to choose the place and the challenger the privilege to make the distance. This last rule underwent change on this side of the water, the choice of place and weapons and the making of distance being conceded to the challenged. Reynolds and his second, Linn, in the second controversy, endeavored to invoke the Galway rule giving the challenger a voice in the distance, but failed.

The third of Sabine's cases, which from the worn leaves and the pencil-markings seems to have been viewed as a code precedent by the St. Louis duellists, was the meeting between Armistead T. Mason, member of Congress from Virginia, and John McCarty, near Washington. In this case seconds assumed authority to decide the question of distance. Mason sent the challenge telling his second to agree to any distance, "to three feet, his pretended favorite distance, or to three inches should his impetuous and rash courage prefer it." Upon accepting the challenge McCarty offered to fight "on a barrel of gunpowder or with dirks." Mason's second refused to listen to any proposition of that kind. McCarty then wrote his acceptance, and said: "As I am at liberty to select the weapon with which I am to fight, I beg leave to propose a musket charged with buckshot and at a distance of ten feet." The seconds of both principals took matters in their own hands and decided "to substitute a single ball for buckshot and to increase the distance to more than twelve feet." Mason was killed and McCarty was badly wounded. The quotations given are marked in the Sabine book.

Benton devoted to duelling a chapter in his "Thirty Years' View," which was the "history of the workings of the American government," as observed by him during his five terms in the Senate, from 1820 to 1850. The act of Congress, following the Cilley tragedy, made the penalties for duelling in the District of Columbia death to all of the survivors when one of the principals was killed, and five years in the penitentiary for giving or accepting a challenge. This law was made the text for Benton's comment upon duelling:

Certainly it is deplorable to see a young man, the hope of his father and mother—a ripe man, the head of a family—an eminent man necessary to his country—struck down in a duel; and should be prevented if possible. Still this deplorable practice is not so bad as the bowie knife and the revolver, and their pretext of self-defense—thirsting for blood. In the duel, there is at least consent on both sides, with a preliminary opportunity for settlement, with a chance for the law to arrest them, and room for the interposition of friends as the affair goes on. There is usually equality of terms; and it would not be called an affair of honor if honor was not to prevail all round; and if the satisfying a point of honor, and not vengeance, was not the end to be attained. Finally, in the regular duel, the principals are in the hands of the seconds (for no man can be made a second without his consent); and as both these are required by the duelling code (for the sake of fairness and humanity), to be free from ill will or grudge towards the adversary principal, they are expected

*I beg leave now to refer you to Sabine's Notes (page 95) where (Mr. Graves having challenged Mr. Cilley) you will find the following:*

*Washington, February 23d, 1838. Sir:—Mr. Cilley proposes to meet Mr. Graves at such place as may be agreed upon between us, to-morrow at twelve o'clock, M. The weapons to be used on the occasion shall be rifles, the (principals) placed side by side at eighty yards distance from each other, to hold the rifles horizontally at arm's length downwards, etc., etc.*

*[Sgn.] Your very obd't serv't,*

*George W. Jones.*

*These terms were accepted by the Hon. Henry A. Wise (the second of Graves), with the mutual understanding that the rifles should be loaded with a single ball, etc.*

*You will thus perceive that eighty yards was the distance used in the case which we agreed to take as a general rule to govern us.*

*If now you will have the kindness to turn to page 29, same work, under head of "Weapons and Rules," you will find the following:*

*"The challenged party, it may be assumed, has always selected the place, distance, time and weapons, and has thus by a choice designed to be least dangerous to himself and most hazardous to his opponent, possessed an advantage. . . ."*

*You will by this further perceive that in selecting the distance which I did, I acted entirely in accordance with my right under the code to which your principal has seen fit to appeal, and the precedent which had been mentioned between us; therefore it is with much surprise that I find you objecting to my terms and can only account for your so doing by supposing that you expected from courtesy that which you clearly could not demand as a right.*

*How far the question of courtesy would justify me in yielding up the rights of my principal in any case, I am not prepared to say. I am, however, clearly of opinion that in this particular instance, I would not be justified either by public sentiment or my own sense of rectitude and propriety, in giving up one jot or tittle of the right held by my principal under the code—and for these good and substantial reasons:*

*That this difficulty has not been sought by him in the slightest degree.*

*That the first note delivered to him gave him no opportunity to make such an explanation as a gentleman could render without compromising his claim to that character.*

*That that first demand was not characterized by that courtesy, which is now sought to be exacted.*

THE EXPLANATORY NARRATIVE

to terminate the affair as soon as the point of honor is satisfied, and the less the injury, so much the better. The only exceptions to these rules are, where the principals are in such relations to each other as to admit of no accommodation, and the injury such as to admit of no compromise. In the knife and revolver business all this is different. There is no preliminary interval for settlement—no chance for officers of justice to intervene—no room for friends to interpose. Instead of equality of terms, every advantage is sought. Instead of consent, the victim is set upon at the most unguarded moment. Instead of satisfying a point of honor, it is vengeance to be glutted. Nor does the difference stop with death. In the duel the unhurt principal scorns to continue the combat upon his disabled adversary; in the knife and revolver case, the hero of these weapons continues firing and stabbing while the prostrate body of the dying man gives a sign of life. In the duel the survivor never assails the character of the fallen; in the knife and revolver case, the first movement of the victor is to attack the character of his victim—to accuse him of an attempt to murder; and to make out a case of self-defense, by making out a case of premeditated attack against the other. And in such false accusation, the French proverb is usually verified—the dead and the absent are always in the wrong.

The extraordinary interest which Benton took in "affairs of honor" was shown in his peculiar relationship to the Clay-Randolph duel. Having been a principal, a second, an adviser, an attorney, a historian in these affairs, Benton created for himself another and an almost unprecedented role. He was "amicus" under the code when Clay and Randolph met across the Potomac from Washington in 1826. Benton and Randolph were Senators, Clay was Secretary of State in the Cabinet of John Quincy Adams. Clay challenged Randolph for denouncing "the administration as a corrupt coalition between the Puritan and blackleg." Benton wrote:

It was Saturday, the first day of April, toward noon, the Senate not being that day in session, that Mr. Randolph came to my room at Brown's hotel, and without explaining the reason of the question, asked me if I was a blood relation of Mrs. Clay. I answered that I was, and he immediately replied that that put an end to a request which he had wished to make of me; and then went on to tell me that he had just received a challenge from Mr. Clay, had accepted it, was ready to go out, and would apply to Colonel Tatnall to be his second. Before leaving he told me he would make my bosom the depository of a secret which he should commit to no other person. It was that he did not intend to fire at Mr. Clay. He told it to me because he wanted a witness of his intention, and did not mean to tell it to his second or anybody else; and enjoined inviolable secrecy until the duel was over. This was the first notice I had of the affair.

The duel was set for Saturday, the eighth of April, on the Virginia side—"pistols the weapons, distance ten paces, each party to be attended by two seconds and a surgeon, and myself at liberty to attend as a mutual friend."

According to Mr. Benton, further, "there was to be no practising with pistols, and there was none; and the words 'one,' 'two,' 'three,' 'stop,' after the word 'fire,' were, by agreement between the seconds, and for the humane purpose of reducing the result as near as possible to chance, to be given out in quick succession. The Virginia side of the Potomac was taken at the

*That, finally, the reason given for claiming this courtesy (that is, near-sightedness) is not regarded as a sufficient one. I would state that I have taken some little trouble to inform myself upon this latter subject and have found that this natural defect has generally been, and can always be, remedied by the artificial means usually adopted of properly arranged glasses.*

*I am, therefore, forced to the conclusion that you have no right to claim either under courtesy, custom or justice, that my principal should relinquish his own distance of eighty yards and assent to yours of twenty.*

*I would state in this connection that as your principal has already stigmatized the rifle as a "barbarous weapon" even at eighty yards, therefore for a still stronger reason might he regard it as a savage weapon at twenty.*

*In conclusion allow me, sir, to assure you personally that I am well satisfied that your course of action in this controversy has been dictated by the most worthy and proper motives, and I only regret that I should have found myself differing in opinion with one, for whose true and gentlemanly appreciation of justice, I have always entertained so high an opinion.*

*I am, sir,*

*Very respectfully, your obd't serv't,  
D. M. Frost.*

## XXI

### LINN RAISES A QUESTION OF MEMORY

ST. LOUIS, 27 March, 1855

Capt. D. M. Frost.

Dear Sir:

*Although I had hoped all agency on my part in the late unpleasant difficulty had ceased by my note of the 25th instant, and notwithstanding the return of Mr. Reynolds' note of the same date (which I decline taking advantage of as a precedent), I proceed to reply to your note of the 26th, in the same spirit of courtesy in which I feel assured it was written.*

*Our recollections do not exactly accord in regard to the conversation of Friday, referred to in the first part of your note. In speaking of the weapons, etc., reference was made to the Cilley affair, and, instead of my "immediately" suggesting that we should adopt the same, I asked you the question whether you wished the proceedings in that case to govern in all respects and you replied that you had never read them, but, that from the high character of the gentlemen concerned in that affair,*

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instance of Mr. Randolph. He went out as a Virginia Senator, refusing to compromise that character, and, if he fell in defense of his rights, Virginia soil was to him the chosen ground to receive his blood. There was a statute of the State against duelling within her limits; but as he merely went out to receive a fire without returning it, he deemed that no fighting, and consequently no breach of her statute. This reason for choosing Virginia could only be explained to me, as I alone was the depository of his secret."

During the week Benton followed the development of details which he described in a minutely circumstantial account—a wonderful model of reporting. On Friday evening he called at the Clay home and spent some time with the family, remaining late for a private conversation with Secretary Clay. "There had been some alienation between us since the time of the Presidential election in the House of Representatives, and I wished to give evidence that there was nothing personal in it," he explained. Benton said to Clay, "that notwithstanding our late political differences, my personal feelings towards him were the same as formerly, and that, in whatever concerned his life and honor, my best wishes were with him. He expressed his gratification at the visit and the declaration, and said it was what he would have expected of me. We parted at midnight."

Visits  
to Both  
Principals

At noon the next day, prompted seemingly by the fascination which the code had for him, Benton was at the lodgings of Randolph. He had already arranged to attend the duel, which was to be on the Virginia side, near the Little Falls bridge. Randolph lived about half way between Washington and Georgetown. Benton started early and stopped at Randolph's "for a purpose."

I had heard nothing from him on the point of not returning the fire since the first communication to that effect eight days before. I had no reason to doubt the steadiness of his determination, but felt a desire to have fresh assurance of it after so many days' delay and so near approach of the trying moment. I knew it would not do to ask him the question—any question which would imply a doubt of his word. His sensitive feelings would be hurt and annoyed at it. So I fell upon a scheme to get at the inquiry without seeming to make it. I told him of my visit to Mr. Clay the night before, of the late sitting, the child asleep, the unconscious tranquillity of Mrs. Clay, and added I could not help reflecting how different all that might be the next night. He understood me perfectly, and immediately said, with a quietude of look and expression which seemed to rebuke an unworthy doubt, "I shall do nothing to disturb the sleep of the child or the repose of the mother," and went on with his employment (his seconds being engaged in their preparations in a different room), which was making codicils to his will, all in the way of remembrances to friends; the bequests slight in value but invaluable in tenderness of feeling and beauty of expression, and always appropriate to the receiver.

Randolph wanted to give mementos to his seconds, Tatnall and Hamilton and to Benton. He proposed to have seals made from gold pieces. He sent his body servant, Johnny, to the Corcoran & Riggs bank, near the White House, to get the gold pieces. Johnny came back with the answer that the

*your then impression was that we should find them correct in all the main principles, yet that it might be necessary to vary them to suit the present case; and I then rejoined that we would find no difficulty, but would agree upon the details, on board the boat, etc. This is my recollection of the substance of the conversation, and when I call your attention again to the fact, we both agreed on, that neither of us had read the agreement in the Cilley affair, I cannot but hope that you will agree with me that neither of us could have intended at that time to bind our principals in all respects to articles we were not then acquainted with, from mere confidence in the high character of the parties to that affair. But I agree in your recollection that it was stated by you in that conversation, it might be necessary to vary those rules to suit the present case (i. e., the then present parties to it); and I adduce that joint recollection as the strongest evidence that all necessary variations were to be afterwards agreed upon. The conversation was a hurried one, both looking to the probable necessity of having to leave the city immediately, and it is therefore not strange that an unimportant difference should exist as to the exact particulars of it. I say unimportant, because I contend that even taking the Cilley rules as a general guide, there is no departure from them, with the understanding we both agree on, of necessary alterations; in the Cilley affair there was no inequality of sight existing in the parties, so nothing on that point could have been arranged on that occasion.*

*I would recall your recollection to the fact that your note, dated on Friday, the 23d, was not handed to me until Sunday, the 25th, at two o'clock, and after I had handed you Mr. Reynolds' note of the 23d requiring a shorter distance, which note was returned to us. That fact, however, is now referred to solely to sustain my view, that, up to Sunday when it was handed to you, I considered all necessary alterations or agreement, to suit the case and parties, to be in order.*

*To confirm the accuracy of my own recollection, I will also recall your attention to the fact that an hour or two after our conversation on the 23d, I informed you that my principal would send a reply to your principal's note of that date and would exercise his right to shorten the distance to twenty paces; and in your note, dated two days afterwards, you place the refusal of your principal to meet mine at any other distance than eighty, on other grounds than that it was a change in our arrangements, definitely settled; nor do I recollect to have heard you make the present objection until after your receipt of my note of the 25th.*

*I regret, my dear sir, that you have accompanied your note of the 26th with an expression of your own opinions on the merits of the dispute, as the doing so imposes on me the necessity I had hoped to have avoided, of*

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bank had no gold. Randolph called for his own horse, rode to the bank, and, after a scene, obtained the gold pieces. He came back to his lodgings and gave to Benton a sealed paper to be opened if he was killed, but returned if he was not; also an open slip of paper which Benton was to read before he got to the duelling ground. The slip was a request to Benton to feel in Randolph's left breeches pocket, if he was killed, and find nine gold pieces. "Take three for myself, and give the same number to Tatnall and Hamilton each, to make seals to wear in remembrance of him." These details disposed of, the party set out from Randolph's lodgings, "Mr. Randolph and his seconds in a carriage, I following on horseback."

In the history of the code there is perhaps no other narrative which will compare with the description Benton wrote of that duel. He was deeply impressed, notwithstanding the many previous experiences he had had, for, he said, "It was about the last high-toned duel that I have witnessed, and among the highest-toned that I have ever witnessed, and so happily conducted to a fortunate issue—a result due to the noble character of the seconds as well as to the generous and heroic spirit of the principals." This is Benton's account of the duel itself:

The  
"Highest-  
toned"  
Duel

I have already said that the count was to be quick after giving the word "fire," and for a reason which could not be told to the principals. To Mr. Randolph, who did not mean to fire, and who, though agreeing to be shot at, had no desire to be hit, this rapidity of counting out the time and quick arrival at the command "stop," presented no objection. With Mr. Clay it was different. With him it was all a real transaction, and gave rise to some proposal for more deliberation in counting off the time, which, being communicated to Colonel Tatnall, and by him to Mr. Randolph, had an ill effect upon his feelings, and, aided by an untoward accident on the ground, unsettled for a moment the noble determination which he had formed not to fire at Mr. Clay. I now give the words of Gen. Jesup:

"When I repeated to Mr. Clay the 'word' in the manner in which it would be given, he expressed some apprehension that, as he was not accustomed to the use of the pistol, he might not be able to fire within the time, and for that reason alone desired that it might be prolonged. I mentioned to Col. Tatnall the desire of Mr. Clay. He replied, 'If you insist upon it, the time must be prolonged, but I should very much regret it.' I informed him I did not insist upon prolonging the time, and I was sure Mr. Clay would acquiesce. The original agreement was carried out."

I knew nothing of this until it was too late to speak with the seconds or principals. I had crossed the Little Falls bridge just after them, and come to the place where the servants and carriages had stopped. I saw none of the gentlemen and supposed they had all gone to the spot where the ground was being marked off, but on speaking to Johnny, Mr. Randolph, who was still in the carriage and heard my voice, looked out from the window and said to me: "Colonel, since I saw you and since I have been in this carriage, I have heard something which may make me change my determination. Colonel Hamilton will give you a note which will explain it." Colonel Hamilton was then in the carriage and gave me the note in the course of the evening, of which Mr. Randolph spoke. I readily comprehended that this possible change of determination

*expressing mine. You say "that this difficulty has not been sought by him (Mr. Brown) in the slightest degree." Does not the fact that Mr. Reynolds' private affairs were repeatedly referred to in Mr. Brown's paper in highly offensive terms bear the appearance of seeking a difficulty? We must leave parties who have not been actors in this unpleasant difficulty to decide the question.*

*Again you express your opinion on the optical question of short-sightedness, and the facility of obviating it, etc. Were there any reason to doubt the assurances given of my friend's defective sight, I am convinced no better test can be offered than the distance beyond which he is unable to recognize others than intimate friends, a fact evident to all who know him.*

*You misunderstand us greatly in supposing that we asked to have the distance shortened to twenty paces as an act of courtesy, on the part of Mr. Brown. We asked it as a right, clear and undoubted, as we conceive, and never refused in any other case of which we have knowledge, and because it was based on a physical necessity. I understand even that a demand to shorten distance by either party, after all preliminaries have been agreed on, and after parties are on the ground, is rarely if ever refused, when asked even without assigning reasons, especially after ineffectual firing.*

*We would reiterate the opinion that the weapon selected is considered by most persons of the present day, barbarous and objectionable. Indeed in most parts of our country, it is rigidly objected to, we believe, not only by magnanimous duellists, but even by the surgeons who attend on them. Still as it was your friend's weapon and choice, we were compelled to accept it, feeling fully at liberty to demand a reasonable equality in its use. It was not for us to suggest a more civilized weapon.*

*I forbear pointing out other differences of opinion between us in this affair, for, my dear sir, it is not our opinions, we having been actors in it, even if we both agreed on all points, that are to give character to the proceedings of either party. I therefore conclude with cordially reciprocating the courteous and friendly sentiments contained in your note, and again express my hope that all agency of mine in this matter will cease with this letter.*

*I am, Dear Sir,*

*Respectfully yours, etc.,*

*W. A. Linn.*

THE EXPLANATORY NARRATIVE

related to his firing, but the emphasis with which he pronounced the word "may" clearly showed that his mind was undecided, and left it doubtful whether he would fire or not. No further conversation took place between us; the preparations for the duel were finished; the parties went to their places, and I went forward to a piece of rising ground from which I could see what passed and hear what was said. The faithful Johnny followed me close, speaking not a word, but evincing the deepest anxiety for his beloved master. The place was a thick forest, and the immediate spot a little depression or basin, in which the parties stood. The principals saluted each other courteously as they took their stands. Colonel Tatnall had won the choice of positions, which gave to General Jesup the delivery of the word. They stood on a line east and west—a small stump just behind Mr. Clay; a low gravelly bank rose just behind Mr. Randolph. The latter asked Gen. Jesup to repeat the word as he would give it; and while in the act of doing so, and Mr. Randolph adjusting the butt of his pistol to his hand, the muzzle pointing downward, and almost to the ground, it fired. Instantly Mr. Randolph turned to Colonel Tatnall and said, "I protested against that hair trigger." Colonel Tatnall took the blame to himself for having sprung the hair. Mr. Clay had not then received his pistol. Senator Johnson, of Louisiana, one of his seconds, was carrying it to him, and still several steps from him. This untimely fire, though clearly an accident, necessarily gave rise to some remarks, and a species of inquiry which was conducted with the utmost delicacy, but which, in itself, was of a nature to be inexpressibly painful to a gentleman's feelings. Mr. Clay stopped it with the generous remark that the fire was clearly an accident; and it was so unanimously declared. Another pistol was immediately furnished; an exchange of shots took place, and, happily, without effect upon persons. Mr. Randolph's bullet struck the stump behind Mr. Clay, and Mr. Clay's knocked up the earth and gravel behind Mr. Randolph, and in a line with the level of his hips, both bullets having gone so true and close that it was a marvel how they missed. The moment had come for me to interpose. I went in among the parties and offered my mediation, but nothing could be done. Mr. Clay said, with that wave of the hand with which he was accustomed to put away a trifle, "This is child's play!" and required another fire. Mr. Randolph also demanded another fire. The seconds were directed to reload. While this was doing I prevailed on Mr. Randolph to walk away from his post, and renewed to him more pressingly than ever my importunities to yield to some accommodation; but I found him more determined than I had ever seen him, and for the first time impatient and seemingly annoyed at what I was doing. He was indeed annoyed and dissatisfied. The accidental fire of his pistol preyed upon his feelings. He was doubly chagrined at it, both as a circumstance susceptible in itself of an unfair interpretation, and as having been the immediate and controlling cause of his firing at Mr. Clay. He regretted this fire the instant it was over. He felt that it had subjected him to imputations from which he knew himself to be free—a desire to kill Mr. Clay and a contempt for the laws of his beloved State; and the annoyances which he felt at these vexatious circumstances revived his original determination, and decided him irrevocably to carry it out.

It was in this interval that he told me what he had heard since we parted, and to which he alluded when he spoke to me from the window of the carriage. It was to this effect: That he had been informed by Colonel Tatnall that it was proposed to give out the words with more deliberateness so as to prolong the time for taking aim. This information grated harshly upon his feelings. It unsettled his purpose, and brought

## XXII

## THE PLAN OF PUBLICITY PROPOSED

[*"Draft by Col. T. P. Andrews of a card in the Brown affair, March, '55."*]

*The following correspondence is submitted for the information of my friends and those of the public who may feel interest enough in the case to peruse it. It is submitted without comment, so far as the personal affair is involved. [I] am willing that the correspondence should speak for me.*

*In regard to the cause of this difficulty, I would merely remark that the allegations in the Democrat that I had taken an affidavit or made an oath which was, or might be construed to be, a false one, had not the slightest shadow of foundation. There was no oath or affidavit taken on the occasion the Democrat referred to, either by myself or any other person whatsoever. This is now stated for those not of the legal profession, for all legal persons know that in the acknowledgment of a deed of partnership, no affidavit is ever executed. As Mr. Brown is of the legal profession, it is left to him to explain (having, too, as he stated in his publication an official copy of the deed before him) how he could be ignorant of its nature.*

*As regards the serious offense he alleged against me, that of investing my surplus capital in an industrial business, I have only to allege that I have followed very reputable precedents and gentlemen of this industrial city. Many have, and no doubt from like motives, also invested their surplus means in the gas company, the sugar refinery, the oil and the stove manufactories; all like the one in which I invested, incorporated companies.*

## XXIII

## THE "CARD" AS REYNOLDS GAVE IT OUT

ST. LOUIS, MO., 27 March, 1855

*Mr. Editor: Public attention having been called (without any agency of myself or my friends) to a recent controversy between Mr. B. Gratz Brown, editor of the Missouri Democrat, and myself, I ask you to publish the subjoined correspondence. As to the oath charged to have been taken, I will add that no affidavit of any kind whatever was made by any*

## THE EXPLANATORY NARRATIVE

his mind to the inquiry (as he now told me, and as I found it expressed in the note which he had immediately written in pencil to apprise me of his possible change), whether under these circumstances he might not "disable" his adversary. This note is so characteristic, and such an essential part of this affair, that I here give its very words, so far as relates to this point. It ran thus: Randolph's Change of Mind

"Information received from Colonel Tatnall since I got into the carriage may induce me to change my mind of not returning Mr. Clay's fire. I seek not his death. I would not have his blood on my hands—it will not be upon my soul if shed in self-defense—for the world. He has determined, by the use of a long, preparatory caution by words, to get time to kill me. May I not, then, disable him? Yes, if I please."

It has been seen by the statement of Gen. Jesup that his "information" was a misapprehension; that Mr. Clay had not applied for a prolongation of time for the purpose of getting sure aim, but only to enable his unused hand, long unfamiliar with the pistol, to fire within the limited time; that there was no prolongation, in fact, either granted or insisted upon; but he was in doubt, and Gen. Jesup having won the word, he was having him repeat it in the way he was to give it out, when his finger touched the hair trigger. How unfortunate that I did not know of this in time to speak to Gen. Jesup, when one word from him would have set all right, and saved the imminent risks incurred! This inquiry, "May I not disable him?" was still on Mr. Randolph's mind, and dependent for its solution on the rising incidents of the moment, when the accidental fire of his pistol gave the turn to his feelings which solved the doubt. But he declared to me that he had not aimed at the life of Mr. Clay; that he did not level as high as the knees—not higher than the knee-band; "for it was no mercy to shoot a man in the knee;" that his only object was to disable him and spoil his aim. And then added, with a beauty of expression and depth of feeling which no studied oratory can ever attain and which I shall never forget, these impressive words: "I would not have seen him fall mortally, even doubtfully, wounded for all the land that is watered by the King of Floods and all his tributary streams." He left me to resume his post, utterly refusing to explain out of the Senate anything he had said in it, and with the positive declaration that he would not return the next fire. I withdrew a little way into the woods

and kept my eyes fixed on Mr. Randolph, whom then I knew to be the only one in danger. I saw him receive the fire of Mr. Clay, saw the gravel knocked up in the same place, saw Mr. Randolph raise his pistol—discharge it in the air; heard him say, "I do not fire at you, Mr. Clay," and immediately advancing and offering his hand. He was met in the same spirit. They met half way, shook hands, Mr. Randolph saying jocosely, "You owe me a coat, Mr. Clay"—the bullet had passed through the skirt of the coat, very near the hip—to which Mr. Clay promptly and happily replied, "I am glad the debt is no greater." I had come up and was prompt to proclaim what I had been obliged to keep secret for eight days. The joy of all was extreme at this happy termination of a most critical affair, and we immediately left with lighter hearts than we brought. I stopped to sup with Mr. Randolph and his friends—none of us wanted dinner that day—and had a characteristic time of it. Congratulatory All Around

He asked for the sealed paper he had given me, opened it, took out a check for \$1,000, drawn in my favor, and with which I was requested to have him carried, if killed, to Virginia, and buried under his patrimonial oaks—not let him be buried at Washington, with a hundred hacks after him. He took the gold from his left breeches pocket and said to us (Hamilton, Tatnall and I), "Gentlemen, Clay's bad shooting sha'n't rob you of your seals. I am going to London and will have them made for you," which

*person whatever, in the papers referred to in the editorial of the Democrat of the 20th, or ever is made in such cases. This can be seen by examining the records in the clerk's office of the St. Louis circuit court. In regard to the correspondence, I submit it without comment—and its publication is the notice I reserved myself the right to take of Mr. Brown's friend, "Anti-Know Nothing."*

*I remain, Dear Sir,*

*Yours very truly,*

*Thomas C. Reynolds.*

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THE EXPLANATORY NARRATIVE

he did, and most characteristically, so far as mine were concerned. He went to the herald's office in London and inquired for the Benton family, of which I had often told him there was none, as we only dated on that side from my grandfather in North Carolina. But the name was found and with it a coat of arms—among the quarterings a lion rampant. "That is the family," said he; and had the arms engraved on the seal, the same which I have since habitually worn; and added the motto, "*Factis non verbis*;" of which he was afterwards accustomed to say the *non* should be changed to *et*. But enough. I run into these details, not merely to relate an event, but to show character; and if I have not done it, it is not for want of material but of ability to use.











# THE THIRD CONTROVERSY

[1856]

*Editorials and Cards Leading to the  
Duel in which Brown was Wounded*

## I

## HOSTILITIES RENEWED

[Card from Reynolds credited in his handwriting  
to the "Pilot, July 28," 1856]

*July 28 Pilot*  
St. Louis, Mo., July 28, 1856.  
Mr. Editor: Finding that the *Democrat* has the unblushing effrontery to reiterate the absurd charge that, in a German speech to Germans, I placed Germans and Irish on a level with the negroes, I have only to pronounce it an unmitigated LIE, worthy of a sheet whose proclivity to wilful and deliberate falsehoods is only exceeded by the notorious poltroonery of its editor in defending them, or his meannesses in not withdrawing them after their falsehood has been proved.  
Very respectfully,  
THOS. C. REYNOLDS.

## II

REYNOLDS ACCUSED OF  
BACKING OUT

[Editorial credited in the handwriting of Reynolds,  
"Democrat, 29 July, '56"]

*29 July Democrat*  
Thomas C. Reynolds. 56  
This office holding Pierce candidate for Congress is as full of manifestoes against the Democrat as a guinea-fowl is of eggs; but while denying the statements made in this paper in regard to him, takes good care not to call for the names of those upon whose information they were made. His vaporings are evidence of bad temper, and bad temper would seem to indicate that he considered himself beaten already. Mr. Reynolds must certainly know that the Democrat has higher game in view in this canvass than himself or the bogus ticket on which he is running. He must also know, that he having on a former occasion backed out of a challenge which he sent himself to the editor of this paper, he cannot be longer viewed as within the pale of those who appeal to such modes for the adjustment of personal difficulties, or expect his effusions to be noticed in that light. At present we are too much engaged in the conduct of our journal in a canvass upon which we believe the welfare of the State and the honor of our party depends, to notice his tirades, and have no disposition to fritter time and tamper away in ridiculous controversies, or personal criminations and recriminations.

## THE EXPLANATORY NARRATIVE

The year of the third controversy between Brown and Reynolds was Presidential year in politics. In the spring of that year, 1856, there were those in St. Louis who thought of Thomas H. Benton as a national leader, notwithstanding his successive defeats for the senatorship and his defeat for the House of Representatives two years before. What devotion in a political following! Out of the wreck of the Whig party and between the Free Soil and Pro-Slavery wings of the Democratic party it seemed possible to form a new political organization of dignity. So far the diagnosis of the situation was correct, as results showed. Native Americanism had proven short-lived. The *Democrat* was in line with the drift of public sentiment when, in the second controversy with Reynolds, it held up "Sam" to ridicule. The educated Germans, who had left the fatherland because of their Republican theories, were especially alert for this new party alignment. Alexander Kayser, the St. Louis lawyer, representative of the best German thought and tendency in St. Louis, sought from Mr. Benton an expression whether he would undertake the leadership as the Presidential nominee of the new party—the Republican party. From Washington the old Roman wrote to Mr. Kayser on the 12th of March, 1856:

Benton  
and the  
Presiden-  
tial Nomi-  
nation

I have work enough marked out to occupy the remainder of my life and of a kind to be pleasant and profitable for me, if not beneficial to a future generation—which I think it may be. I propose to abridge the debates of Congress from 1789 to 1850—also to continue my history from 1850 to the day of my death. This is work enough for me and of more dignity (to say nothing of anything else) than acting a part in the slavery agitation which is now the work of both parties and which in my opinion is to end disastrously for the Union, let which side prevail. A new man, unconnected with the agitation, is what the country wants.

A few weeks later the Republican party organized in national convention and nominated for President John C. Fremont, the son-in-law of Benton. Before the summer had passed, Benton himself was in the thick of another political contest. He made a losing campaign for governor of Missouri, supporting Buchanan for President. In January, 1857, there were two senators to be elected, one for the short and one for the long term. Benton was voted for in both cases, but by a decreasing minority. The Pro-Slavery members elected both senators, James S. Green for the short term and Trusten Polk for the long term. Members of the legislature, which elected these senators, were elected at the August election of 1856. Brown delayed sending his challenge to Reynolds about three weeks in order not to interfere with or influence this election, as he explained in his card headed "Personal," and printed in the *Democrat* August 15th, 1856.

The Last  
of the  
Benton  
Campaigns

In this last campaign of Benton's career the third controversy developed.

## III

## "NOTORIOUS POLTROONERY" REYNOLDS "THE RENEGADE"

[Card of Reynolds credited to "Pilot, 29 July,"  
in Reynolds' handwriting]

[Clipping credited in pencil, "Mo. Democrat,  
29 July, 1856"]

*Pilot 29 July*  
St. Louis, Mo., July 29, 1856.  
Mr. Editor: It is one of the inconveniences of politics to have to notice such creatures as Mr. B. G. Brown. If "those upon whose information" Mr. Brown's account of my remarks at Meh's Store was based, choose to pocket the "unmitigated LIE," and Mr. Brown chooses to pocket the charge of "notorious poltroonery," I have no objections, and certainly can have no demands to make on any of them. If anything were needed in this community to settle the question that Mr. Brown has forfeited the position of a gentleman and man of courage, it would be his course in reviving a controversy which was closed by his full retraction of the charge which originated it; and in which he utterly failed in his attempt to whitewash his blackened reputation, by endeavoring to get up a farce of a duel, where his courage would have been based only on the maxim, "who's afraid when he is in no danger," where he refused to fight the moment he was called on to come within a visible distance and the least ridiculous results of which to himself was his being made a public butt of in the songs of the Campbell Minstrels. For him, whom this whole community considers an unquestionable coward, and who has been repeatedly convicted of lying, to venture an opinion on my standing as a gentleman, is the height of insolence, unequalled in intensity only by the abject cravenness with which he has, over and over again, in private and in public life, submitted to insults of the most stinging and degrading kind.  
Apologizing to the public for condescending to notice Mr. Brown, I remain, dear sir, respectfully yours,  
THOS. C. REYNOLDS.

## RALLY

## To hear Benton!

*Mo. Democrat*  
COL. BENTON will address the  
Mass Meeting on SATURDAY  
night next. Let all democrats  
rally on that occasion and hear

OLD BULLION's speech.

*29 July 1856*

Keep it before the People!

That the Anti-Benton men united with the Know-Nothings, to pass the law requiring all naturalized citizens to show their papers at the polls, and that the Anti-Benton Governor signed the bill.

That Mr. Kennett, the know-nothing candidate for Congress, after deceiving Catholic and adopted citizens into voting for him two years ago, immediately betrayed them by joining the know-nothing order.

That Mr. Reynolds, the renegade candidate for Congress, not only electioneered and voted for Mr. Kennett two years ago but that he is now running merely to secure Mr. Kennett's election again, so that Catholic and adopted citizens be may once more cheated out of their votes.

That Mr. Polk is opposed to the completion of our railroads by State aid, and that he refused to appear as an attorney in their behalf before the Supreme court, to enforce the issue of the bonds.

## THE EXPLANATORY NARRATIVE

It was inaugurated with a card from Reynolds accusing the *Democrat* of "willful and deliberate falsehoods," and charging the editor with "notorious poltroonery." The prompt reply, editorially in the *Democrat*, was that Reynolds "on a former occasion backed out of a challenge which he, himself, sent to the editor of this paper," and could not be considered "as within the pale of those who appeal to such modes for the adjustment of personal difficulties."

For each controversy, both Brown and Reynolds chose a different complement of "friends." This brought into active participation eight St. Louisans. George W. Goode and Robert M. Renick, who conducted the very brief negotiations in the first affair, were succeeded by D. M. Frost and W. A. Linn for the long drawn out discussion over distance in the second difficulty. For the conduct of the third controversy resulting in the duel, each of the principals selected two seconds. Reynolds picked Ferdinand Kennett and Thomas B. Hudson. Brown's honor was cared for by D. D. Mitchell and Leo Walker.

Three  
Sets of  
Friends

In his campaign as the nominee of the Anti-Benton Democrats for Congress to represent the St. Louis district, Reynolds was making German speeches. He delivered one of them at a store in St. Louis County, a location settled chiefly by Germans. The *Missouri Democrat* published a report of that speech. Reynolds took exception to the report and sent "a card" to the *Pilot*, which was considered an afternoon edition of the *Missouri Republican*. This started the third controversy. Reynolds not only saved and credited every clipping which had bearing on the controversy, but he cut out of the papers the accounts of two South Carolina duels in which had been treated technicalities of the code. In one of these duels the question of proper holding of the pistols, according to the best usage, had arisen. Reynolds, evidently, was bent upon a hostile meeting and was overlooking no possible preparation for it.

David D. Mitchell was one of the "conquistadores." That was the term bestowed in St. Louis upon the heroes of Doniphan's wonderful expedition across the plains and the ensuing campaign over the tablelands of Mexico. "Colonel" Mitchell he was by right of commission and brilliant service in the pass of Sacramento. He was a Virginian by nativity. Like other young Virginians before and many more young Virginians who came after, he left the Old Dominion to seek fortune in St. Louis, and remained to grow with the city. Mitchell's first choice of vocation was with the fur traders. He traveled up the Missouri far into the Northwest and became a partner in what was known as "the Upper Missouri Outfit." After that experience, Mitchell took up his residence in St. Louis, about 1841. He was appointed superintendent of Indian affairs with headquarters in St. Louis and jurisdiction over a vast region. This position he held several years. When Sterling Price resigned his seat in Congress to raise a

One of  
Doni-  
phan's  
Heroes

## V

## THE "POSTING" OF BROWN

[Clipping credited in the handwriting of Reynolds, "Jeff. City Examiner, 2 Aug't, 1856"]

### A Card from Thomas C. Reynolds, Esq.

From the *Missouri Republican*. *Pilot*

St. Louis, Mo., July 28, 1856.

MR. EDITOR: Finding that the *Democrat* has the unblushing effrontery to reiterate the absurd charge that, in a German speech to Germans, I placed Germans and Irish on a level with the negroes, I have only to pronounce it an unmitigated lie, worthy of a sheet whose proclivity to wilful and deliberate falsehoods is only exceeded by the notorious poltroonery of its editor in defending them, or his meanness in not withdrawing them after their falsehood has been proved. Very respectfully,

THOS. C. REYNOLDS.

The day on which the above appeared, the *Democrat* published an article relative to Mr. REYNOLDS, from which the following is an extract:

Mr. Reynolds must certainly know that the *Democrat* has higher game in view in this canvass than himself or the Bogus ticket on which he is running. He must also know that he, having on a former occasion backed out of a challenge which he sent himself to the editor of this paper, cannot be longer viewed as within the pale of those who appeal to such modes for the adjustment of personal difficulties, or expect his effusions to be noticed in that light.

The following day Mr. REYNOLDS published the annexed card in the *Republican*:

St. Louis, Mo., July 29, 1856.

MR. EDITOR: It is one of the inconveniences of politics to have to notice such creatures as Mr. B. G. Brown. If "those upon whose information" Mr. Brown's account of my remarks at Mehl's store was based choose to pocket the

"unmitigated lie," and Mr. Brown chooses to pocket the charge of "notorious poltroonery," I have no objections, and certainly can have no demands to make on any of them. If anything were needed in this community to settle the question that Mr. Brown has forfeited the position of a gentleman and man of courage, it would be his course in reviving a controversy which was closed by his full retraction of the charge which originated it; in which he utterly failed in his attempt to whitewash his blackened reputation by endeavoring to get up a farce of a duel, where his courage would have been based only on the maxim, "who's afraid when he is in no danger?" where he refused to fight the moment he was called on to come within a visible distance; and the least ridiculous result of which to himself was his being made a public butt of in the songs of the Campbell Minstrels. For him, whom this whole community considers an unquestionable coward, and who has been repeatedly convicted of lying, to venture an opinion on my standing as a gentleman, is the height of insolence, equalled in intensity only by the abject cravenness with which he has, over and over again, in private and in public life, submitted to insults of the most stinging and degrading kind.

Apologizing to the public for condescending to notice Mr. Brown, I remain, dear sir, respectfully yours, THOS. C. REYNOLDS.

HERBERT, member of Congress from California, arrested for the murder of KEATING, has been tried and acquitted.

*Jeff. City Examiner*  
2 Aug't. 1856

THE EXPLANATORY NARRATIVE

regiment of Missouri volunteers for the Army of the West, and marched across the plains to join Doniphan in Mexico, David D. Mitchell was chosen lieutenant-colonel. Doniphan selected Mitchell to lead the advance guard upon Chihuahua. Mitchell with only 150 men entered that ancient capital of Northern Mexico and took formal possession of it.

There were both political and personal reasons for the interest which Ferd. Kennett took in the duel. The Kennetts were from Tennessee, sons of Press Graves Kennett. Luther M. Kennett was the most conspicuous in politics. He had been mayor of St. Louis and in 1854 defeated Benton for Congress. In 1856, he was the Whig candidate for Congress in the St. Louis district, running against Francis P. Blair, who was the Benton candidate and who was successful. Ferd. Kennett was high spirited, with a taste for military life. In 1846 he was elected lieutenant-colonel of the St. Louis Legion, composed of the military companies of St. Louis, and went with the regiment to reinforce Taylor at the outbreak of the war with Mexico. The St. Louis Legion moved with such celerity that it was the first regiment to reach the front from all other States, except Louisiana. A sense of personal injury done by Benton dated with Ferd. Kennett from a political meeting held in the St.

Louis court house. Benton was delivering an address. Kennett passed up to the speaker a slip of paper upon which was written a request to the senator to give his views on the Wilmot Proviso. This was an amendment offered in Congress by David Wilmot of Pennsylvania, about 1847, stipulating that in any territory which might be acquired from Mexico through pending peace negotiations, slavery should not be permitted to exist. Benton had been against the Proviso. As his position was well known there was no reason why he should not comply with Kennett's request. But after glancing at the paper the senator contemptuously threw it down and went on speaking without a word of reference to it. Kennett, at that time, was favorable to the re-election of Benton. Subsequently he was in a position to do effective work at Jefferson City on the anti-Benton side and he did. Kennett had been in the lead business in Southeast Missouri. He selected a commanding site near the lead shipping point in Jefferson County and built a stone mansion, which he called Selma Hall. The imposing character of the architecture suggested a castle and Selma Hall became more commonly known to those who went up and down the river on boats as Kennett's Castle. It has been a landmark and a show place on the river for more than half a century and still is in perfect condition.

Benton  
Antago-  
nized  
Kennett

Reynolds had in mind to seek the retiracy of an island in the Mississippi, near Ste. Genevieve, some miles lower down the river, but Kennett offered the hospitality of Selma Hall and that was made the rendezvous for the duel.

The publication in the *Jefferson City Examiner* was not an ordinary item of

## VI

## LOCAL COMMENT

[Clipping credited in handwriting of Reynolds, "Pilot, 29 July, '56"]

*Pilot 29 July 56*  
**Good Jokes**  
 That "Old Buck" is a "new man."  
 That Col. Benton's election would cause the  
 rise of Missouri Bonds.  
 That Frank Blair is the peculiar friend of  
 the laboring classes.  
 That Thomas C. Reynolds *backed out* of  
 his challenge to the editor of the *Democrat*.

## VII

## BROWN ANNOUNCES INTENTION TO CHALLENGE

[Clipping credited in handwriting of Reynolds, "Mo. Democrat, Friday, 15 Aug't, 1856"]

*Mo. Democrat.  
 Friday 15 Aug't  
 1856*

**Personal.**

During the late canvass a letter appeared in the Missouri Republican, over the signature of Thomas C. Reynolds, personally vituperative of the editor of this paper. We had no desire to mingle our own personal conflicts with the excitement of an election, and deferred taking it into consideration until that event should be over. Mr. Reynolds is now absent from the city, as we learn, and we shall therefore defer any notice of this matter until his return to St. Louis.

THE EXPLANATORY NARRATIVE

news. It was part of Reynolds' programme to compel Brown to challenge him. Two cards, which Reynolds had sent to the *Missouri Republican* or the *Pilot*, constituted what, in the language of the code, was known as "posting" an adversary. By the publication of these cards Reynolds "posted" Brown. That was to say, he proclaimed him in the most public manner possible to be dishonorable and cowardly. The "posting" thus performed in St. Louis, Reynolds wished to extend to the whole State. Therefore he sent the two cards, with an extract from the *Democrat* editorial, to the *Examiner*. The editor of that paper published the matter under the caption, "A Card from Thomas C. Reynolds, Esq." By employing that form, the editor of the *Examiner* was, according to the code, relieved from any personal responsibility for publication, while Reynolds accomplished his purpose to "post" Brown for Missouri as well as for St. Louis. Technicalities in the practice of the code were thus observed.

The  
"Posting"  
of  
Brown

In postponing his challenge on political considerations, Brown followed a St. Louis precedent, a case in which Benton had been active as an adviser. When it seemed as if the Pettis-Biddle affair, in 1831, would be brought to an immediate issue, Benton urged and effected delay until after the August election. In that duel Dr. Lewis F. Linn, afterwards United States Senator, a relative of Reynolds' "friend" in the second controversy, was an attending surgeon.

Manuscript collections of the Missouri Historical Society give Benton a much closer relationship to the Pettis-Biddle duel than is attributed in the printed accounts of the tragedy. Thomas Biddle was an officer of high standing in the United States Army. He was a brother of Commodore Biddle of the navy and of Nicholas Biddle, president of the United States Bank. He had distinguished himself by gallantry in the war of 1812, and especially at the battle of Lundy's Lane. Making St. Louis his home, Thomas Biddle married a daughter of John Mullanphy. His wealth and social position made him one of the most conspicuous personalities in St. Louis. Spencer Pettis was a member of Congress, the only representative from Missouri. He had just been elected for a second term. He was of Virginia birth, a young man of fine family and very popular.

The Pettis-  
Biddle  
Precedent

The congressional election was on the second of August. In his speeches during the campaign, Pettis attacked the United States Bank. He was a follower of Benton. But he not only assailed the bank on principle; he reflected on the management in such manner as to arouse the indignation of Major Biddle. The latter replied in one of the St. Louis papers, calling Pettis "a dish of skimmed milk." Pettis published his answer. Early one

## VIII

## A NON-PARTISAN VIEW

[Clipping credited by Reynolds to "St. L. News,  
15 Aug. '56"]

*St. L. News* 15 Aug 56  
A speech of war.

The Missouri Democrat's Christian conciliatory offer to withdraw its own electoral ticket and support that of the Anties, yesterday, encouraged us to hope that the tomahawk was buried forever, and that hereafter peace would reign. How surprised were we, then, to see the following in that paper of this morning:

During the late canvass a letter appeared in the Missouri Republican, over the signature of Thomas C. Reynolds, personally vituperative of the editor of this paper. We had no desire to mingle our own personal conflicts with the excitement of an election, and deferred taking it into consideration until that event should be over. Mr. Reynolds is now absent from the city, as we learn, and we shall therefore defer any notice of this matter until his return to St. Louis.

This would seem to indicate that the peace will not last. The war is to be opened afresh and "prosecuted with increased vigor."—Something ought to be done, and we call on the *Republican*, which has already achieved a reputation for diplomatic ability second only to that of Talleyrand, to interpose and bring about a reconciliation between these hostile parties. It will never do for the peace in general to be scandalized by fights in detail.

## IX

## A SOUTH CAROLINA PRECEDENT

[Clipping credited by Reynolds to "St. L. Pilot,  
16 Aug't. '56"]

*St. L. Pilot* 16 Aug 56

## Duel in South Carolina.

A duel was fought in the vicinity of Charleston, S. C., on the afternoon of the 28th ult., between Col. John Cunningham, of the Charleston *Evening News*, and T. L. Hatch, Esq., of the *Standard*. Col. Cunningham was the challenging party. After an exchange of shots, without injury to either party, the affair was amicably adjusted. The entire correspondence, accompanying a statement of the seconds to the public, is published in the Charleston papers. The only noticeable circumstance in the preliminary proceedings, is the following:

"Mr. Taber and Mr. Lord met at 2 o'clock on the 26th to arrange the preliminaries; but failing to agree as to the mode of holding the weapon—Mr. Lord proposing 'the rise shot,' and Mr. Taber 'the drop shot,' or that both parties should fire as they severally preferred—referred the point, which was decided as follows:

"Mr. Taber, acting on the part of Col. Cunningham, and Mr. Lord on the part of Mr. Hatch, have submitted to us, as referees, the point, whether pistols shall be held muzzles down and barrels perpendicular, or whether they shall be held muzzles up, whether either party shall be at liberty to hold his weapon muzzle up or down at pleasure." Being unable to agree upon the point, it was referred by us to Mr. Clarence Cochran, Esq., who decides that the rule laid down by Wilson, in his Code of Honor, shall govern, and the pistols be held muzzles down and barrels perpendicular.

ALFRED RHETT,  
JAMES CONNER,

Charleston, July 28, 1856.

I desire to enter my protest against the decision of this reference, upon this ground, that the recent usage of the State has been against the rule laid down by Wilson, and therefore the drop shot is admissible.

ALFRED RHETT."

THE EXPLANATORY NARRATIVE

morning Biddle went to the hotel where Pettis was stopping. He found the congressman in bed, pulled off the cover and used a whip. There could be but one outcome for such an insult.

The condition of short-sightedness entered into the Pettis-Biddle duel. One account of the circumstances leading to the duel is that Pettis, anticipating a hostile meeting, went before Judge Peter Ferguson and made a sworn statement about the attack upon him in the hotel. He proceeded from Ferguson's office to the printer to have the statement put in type. Ferguson, made aware of what had taken place, issued a writ against Biddle to keep the peace. Biddle met Pettis and told him that if challenged he would accept. This was after the election, between three and four weeks. Pettis challenged at once. Biddle being the challenged principal, made the terms. He set the next day for the duel and made the distance five feet, because of short-sightedness. The meeting took place at three o'clock in the afternoon. Old inhabitants, eighty years after the occurrence, point out a spot on the Illinois side, almost exactly opposite the foot of Biddle Street, St. Louis, as the location of the cross-marks for the Pettis-Biddle meeting.

Biddle  
was Short-  
Sighted

Benton's intimate relationship with the Pettis-Biddle duel is told in these personal recollections of Edward Dobyns, preserved by the Missouri Historical Society:

Upon the attack on one of the parties at the City Hotel in July, 1831, Mrs. Benton having heard a difficulty or noise about daybreak suggested to Mr. Benton the probable cause. He at once arose and went over and found that her suspicions were true. Mr. Benton spent about five minutes in which a masterly stroke of policy was exhibited, rarely ever seen in connection with an event of such magnitude. All political historians will remember that the party attacked was a candidate for re-election to a seat in Congress from Missouri, and that the occurrence took place just before the day of election. In that five minutes' interview Mr. Benton said: "Let there be no definite action taken in this matter until this election is over. And then, sir, I leave you to vindicate your honor in such manner as you may deem most consistent with the principles that govern gentlemen."

Benton  
Secured  
Postpone-  
ment

This suggestion was yielded to with much reluctance on the part of the attacked, and all that are acquainted with the history of that day, remember the political result. It was my privilege to have enjoyed the personal acquaintance of all of the parties in the tragical affair, and I honored them all, enjoying their friendship. During the days just preceding the fatal meeting I often met Mr. Benton at his residence, having been requested by him to call every day as he did not often go out amongst the people. Upon one occasion when I called, Dr. Lewis F. Linn, the surgeon of one of the parties, was just coming out of the parlor. It was the day before the fatal duel. Mr. Benton said, with evident deep feeling and seriousness, "There will be no child's play in the meeting." I suppose Dr. Linn had informed him that the distance was only five feet apart. There was not much said; a deep seriousness seemed to pervade the mind of Mr. Benton. The fatal meeting took place on the next day, August 27th, 1831, at 3 p. m. And now

The foregoing shows the consequence attached to seemingly trivial points in CAROLINA, where the *Code Chivalresque* is practiced with the strictest regard to technical rules and observances. It establishes the important fact about which great misapprehension now prevails at the North and elsewhere, where the *duello* is not so generally recognized as an existing, social institution, that the challenged party has not an unqualified and unrestricted option in the dictation of

terms to his adversary; but that, in settling arrangements for a hostile meeting, the challenger has certain rights and privileges in the premises. It is, perhaps, needless to say, that in the present instance the parties are all of the highest respectability. The precedent of their example, therefore, in similar cases, may be cited as of the best authority. \*

## X

## "A PEREMPTORY CHALLENGE"

ST. LOUIS, August 18th, 1856

Sir:

*Understanding that you were absent from the city I contented myself with stating publicly that I would defer any consideration of your letter published in the "Republican" until your return.*

*Hearing of your arrival I take this the earliest opportunity of demanding from you that satisfaction, for the same, which is due from one gentleman to another.*

*You will please consider this a peremptory challenge.* [Crossed out in pencil.]

B. Gratz Brown.

Thomas C. Reynolds, Esq.

[N. B.—The last sentence, being considered to be offensive, both by Col. F. Kennett and myself, was erased by Mr. Brown.—T. C. R.]

## XI

## THE UNQUALIFIED ACCEPTANCE

ST. LOUIS, August 24, 1856

B. G. Brown, Esq.

D'r Sir:

*Thos. C. Reynolds, Esq., requests me to inform you that he holds himself ready to render you the satisfaction asked for in your note of the 18th inst.*

Resp'y,  
Ferd. Kennett.

St Louis August 18<sup>th</sup> 1856

Sir

Understanding that you were absent from the city I contented myself with stating publicly that I would defer any consideration of your letter published in the "Republican" until your return.

Hearing of your arrival I take this the earliest opportunity of demanding from you that satisfaction, for the same, which is due from one gentleman to another.

You will please consider this a peremptory challenge

D. Nath Brown

Thomas. C. Reynolds Esq.

N.B. The last sentence being considered to be offensive, both by Col. F. Kennett & myself, was erased by Mr. Brown - J. C. R.



THE EXPLANATORY NARRATIVE

we come to the historic error. After the fatal meeting, the parties, with their friends, crossed back to the St. Louis side of the river, and the immense collection of people that had assembled on the river bank, at the hour of the meeting, separated and the friends of one went up and the friends of the other went down to meet their friend at the foot of Vine Street. As the yawl approached the shore Mr. Pettis was leaning on the breast of his surgeon, Dr. Linn, who supported him in his arms. Captain Martin Thomas, his second, was holding a vial from which the wounded man was inhaling to keep up life. It was my privilege to have been the first to meet the party, as they neared the shore, and know of my own knowledge what occurred, and am, therefore, prepared to correct the error of a distinguished writer who has said that when Mr. Pettis was brought back from the duelling ground, Judge Peck was among the first to meet him and offer sympathy; that Mr. Pettis said to him, "Did I vindicate my honor?" "Yes," said the judge, "you have vindicated your honor like a man—a man of bravery, sir." This is an error. Judge Peck was not present at the landing of the party. When the skiff neared the shore, Mr. Pettis, in his reclining position, in the arms of his surgeon, looked up and caught the eye of Mr. Benton and said, "Colonel Benton, have I acted the poltroon?" To which Colonel Benton replied: "No, sir; you have shown yourself to be the bravest of the brave." These were the words of Mr. Benton, not of Judge Peck.

The  
Return  
From  
Bloody  
Island

Judge Peck came to the room of the dying statesman the night after the fatal meeting and stayed by his bedside until his death, and exhibited great sympathy and showed profound interest for him. Just before his death Mr. Pettis gave a deep moan. The judge, seeing that death was rapidly approaching, said: "Mr. Pettis, you have proved yourself to be a brave man; now, die like a man." Mr. Pettis said: "Yes, sir," and in a few moments passed away. Considering that Mr. Pettis was a political opponent of the party to which Judge Peck belonged, I have often thought and said that Judge Peck deserved great praise for his sympathy and interest shown to Mr. Pettis.

"Now, Die  
Like a  
Man"

Mr. Benton's whole course was calm, collected and dignified, never uttering a harsh word, or giving expression to a feeling of unkindness to any party. He presided at the meeting of the friends of Mr. Pettis, who met to give expression to their regrets; wrote the account of the duel in a calm, dignified and impartial style, which Dr. Linn and I took from his residence down to the *St. Louis Beacon*, a paper published by Colonel Charles Keemle. This notice was copied into almost all of the papers of the United States.

One of the earliest accounts of this duel, thought to be from the description written by Benton, is given:

The pistols were then loaded, and put in the hands of the principals, who were stationed at the distance of five feet apart. The seconds then stood at right angles between the principals. The seconds then cocked their pistols, keeping their eyes on each other and on their principals. They had thrown up for positions, when Pettis had won the choice. Everything being ready, the pistols having been loaded, cocked and primed, and put into the hands of the principals, the words were pronounced, according to the rule of duelling—"Are you ready?" Both answered, "We are." The seconds then counted—"One—two—three." After the word was given both principals fired with outstretched arms. The pistols were twelve or fifteen inches in length and they lapped and

Benton's  
Account  
of the  
Duel

## XII

## CONDITIONS OF THE "HOSTILE MEETING"

## ARTICLES OF AGREEMENT

*Entered into between David D. Mitchell, Esqr., and Ferdinand Kennett (parties second), in view of a hostile meeting between B. Gratz Brown, Esqr., and Thomas C. Reynolds, Esqr., parties principal.*

*Article 1st—The meeting shall be at the island near Selma, Mo., on the            day of            1856, at            o'clock.*

*Article 2d—Each principal may be accompanied by two (and no more) friends, surgeons excepted.*

*Article 3d—Each principal may dress in the usual men's walking dress, divesting himself of any unusual appendage or contents of pockets.*

*Article 4th—The principals shall be placed in positions as nearly as possible equally advantageous and with the sun or light to one side.*

*Article 5th—The choice of position shall be decided by lot between the seconds, and the second who loses the choice of position shall have the giving of the word.*

*Article 6th—The weapons to be used by the principals shall be the ordinary percussion cap duelling pistol, with single or double sights, smooth bore of not over half inch diameter and not exceeding ten and three-fourths inches long from the nipple to the muzzle. Each pistol shall be loaded with a single round ball, with or without a patch, in the presence of both seconds.*

*Article 7th—The distance between the principals shall be twelve yards, English, or thirty-six feet.*

*Article 8th—Each principal shall stand with his right side facing the other; shall hold his pistol in his right hand, the barrel perpendicular and the muzzle upwards, the hand not to be held lower than the elbow.*

*Article 9th—The second who shall win the giving of the word, shall cry out audibly: Gentlemen, are you ready? and when both parties shall have answered: Ready! he shall give the word: Fire!—One—Stop! in a deliberate manner with an interval not exceeding one second between each word.*

*Article 10th—The parties principal may fire at any time after the word Fire! and before the word Stop!—and either party principal firing before the word Fire! or after the word Stop! shall forfeit his life at the discretion of the second of the opposite party.*

Articles of agreement entered into  
between David D. Mitchell Esq and  
Frederick Hume (parties second) in  
view of ~~the~~ hostile meeting between B.  
Gratz Brown Esq and Thomas C  
Reynolds Esq parties principal  
Article 1<sup>st</sup> - The meeting shall be at  
the Island near ~~St. Lawrence~~ <sup>Selma, Mo</sup> on the  
day of 1836 at o'clock.

Article 2<sup>d</sup> - Each principal may be  
accompanied by two (and no more)  
friends surgeons excepted.

Article 3<sup>d</sup> - Each principal may dress  
in the usual men's walking dress - diverting  
himself of any unusual appendage  
or contents of pockets.

Article 4<sup>th</sup> - The principals shall be  
placed in positions as nearly as  
possible equally advantageous and  
with the sun or light to one side.

Article 5<sup>th</sup> - The choice of position  
shall be decided by lot between the  
seconds and the second who loses  
the choice of position shall have  
the giving of the word.

Article 6<sup>th</sup> - The weapons to be used by the principals shall be the ordinary percussion Cap duelling pistol with single or double sight smooth bore of not over half inch diameter and not exceeding ten &  $\frac{3}{4}$  inches long from the nipple to the muzzle. Each pistol shall be loaded with a single round ball with or without a patch in the presence of both seconds.

Article 7<sup>th</sup> - The distance between the principals shall be twelve yards english or thirty six feet.

Article 8<sup>th</sup> - Each principal shall stand with his right side facing the other; shall hold his pistol in his right hand, the barrel perpendicular and the muzzle <sup>upwards</sup> ~~upwards~~ - the hand not to be held lower than the elbow.

Article 9<sup>th</sup> The second who shall give the giving of the word shall cry out audibly - Gentlemen - Are you ready? And when both parties shall have answered ready, he shall give the word - Fire - One - Stop - in a deliberate manner with an interval not exceeding one second between each word.

Article 10<sup>th</sup> The parties principal may fire at any time after the word Fire and before the word Stop - and either party principal firing before the word Fire or after the word Stop shall forfeit his life at the discretion of the second of the opposite party.

Article 11<sup>th</sup> A principal who shall not have fired before the word Stop shall as soon as the second commences to pronounce it, lower his pistol and return it undischarged to his second - a snap or misfire to be counted a fire -

Article 12<sup>th</sup> From and after the presentation of these proposals neither party principal shall practice in firing -

Article 13<sup>th</sup> With the view of enforcing these articles each party second shall be armed with an ordinary duelling pistol loaded with one ball

Signed in duplicate this 23<sup>rd</sup> day of August  
1856

D. D. Mitchell  
H. P. Kennel

Agreement signed  
23 Aug 56 for  
meeting between J.  
E. Reynolds & B. G.  
Prison -

THE EXPLANATORY NARRATIVE

struck against each other, as they were discharged. There was scarcely any chance for either to escape instant death. They both fired so simultaneously, that the people on the shore heard only one report, and both men fell at the same time.

The seconds in this duel were Captain Thomas and Major Ben O'Fallon.

Brown sent his challenge on the 18th of August. He made it strong. He not only demanded "that satisfaction which is due one gentleman from another," but he added, rather gratuitously, "you will please consider this a peremptory challenge." Reynolds objected to the addition and Brown drew a pencil through the words. The acceptance was withheld until the 24th, just before departure for the rendezvous, because Reynolds was apprehensive of arrest. His statement to Isaac H. Sturgeon, given elsewhere, is interesting in this connection. Preparations for the meeting went on before the formal acceptance. On the 16th of August Reynolds cut from a St. Louis paper the expert opinion of Alfred Rhett of South Carolina that "the drop shot is admissible." This was the style of shooting which Reynolds preferred and which he embodied in a first draft of an agreement to govern the duel. This draft, which is preserved in the Bixby collection, is in the handwriting of Reynolds. On the back of it Reynolds indorsed:

Reynolds'  
Original  
Draft

Brown v. Reynolds  
Articles as drawn by me  
and modified by Col. Kennett,  
Saturday, 23 Aug't, 1856.

The first article in this original draft left a blank for the place of meeting, which was filled in with pencil, "the island near Ste. Genevieve." The day and hour of meeting were left blank. It appears that the intention was to seek an island near Ste. Genevieve and that the sandbar opposite Kennett's home at Selma was a later suggestion.

The second article Colonel Kennett did not change from the form in which Reynolds drafted it.

The third article as at first written provided that "each principal may dress in such material as he may prefer and in the usual men's walking dress." To this, Kennett, having in mind the niceties of the code, added, "divesting himself of any unusual appendage or contents of pockets." This addition is made in pencil.

Kennett made no changes in the fourth and fifth articles. In the sixth Reynolds left blank places for some of the details of the weapons to be used. In the description of the pistols "nipple" was substituted for "touch-hole." In the matter of loading the pistols the words "with or without a patch" over the ball were interlined with pencil.

The  
Changes  
Kennett  
Made

In the ninth article Kennett exercised his judgment in a way that prob-

*Article 11th—A principal who shall not have fired before the word Stop! shall, as soon as the second commences to pronounce it, lower his pistol and return it undischarged to his second—a snap or misfire to be counted a fire.*

*Article 12th—From and after the presentation of these proposals, neither party principal shall practice in firing.*

*Article 13th—With the view of enforcing these articles, each party second shall be armed with an ordinary duelling pistol loaded with one ball.*

*Signed in duplicate, this 23d day of August, 1856.*

*D. D. Mitchell,  
Ferd. Kennett.*

[Endorsed: "Agreement signed, 23d Aug't, '56,  
for meeting between T. C. Reynolds and B. G. Brown."]

### XIII

#### THE CALIBER OF THE PISTOLS

SELMA, 26 August, 1856

Col. Mitchell.

D'r Sir:

*I have submitted to Mr. Reynolds the difference in caliber of pistols proposed to be used, and although Mr. Reynolds and myself both think it is clearly our right to object to the very large bore of Mr. Brown's weapon, we are willing to waive all objection on that score, and are now ready to proceed to the sandbar as agreed between us.*

*Resp'y,  
F. Kennett.*

[Copy, Thos. B. Hudson.]

[Endorsed: "Col. F. Kennett to Col. D. D. Mitchell,  
Selma, 26th Aug., 1856," with a penciled memorandum in  
parenthesis: "(Duel was fought 27th Aug., '56.)"]

THE EXPLANATORY NARRATIVE

ably prevented a fatal ending of the duel. As Reynolds drew the agreement, the firing was to have been deliberate. He wrote this article:

"The second to whom shall fall the giving of the word shall cry out audibly, 'Are you ready?' and when both principals shall have answered 'Ready,' he shall say 'Fire—one—stop,' in a deliberate manner with an interval not exceeding one minute between each word."

Two changes were made in the firing conditions before Kennett was satisfied. Between the words "one" and "minute" was written in pencil the word "half," so that the reading was "one-half minute." Then the words "half minute" were scratched out and the word "second" was written above in pencil. The final change limited the time of firing to the enunciation of three monosyllables and two seconds. Within that brief space the pistol must be lowered, the aim taken and the fire delivered.

Kennett made one other change in this article, but it was only observance of etiquette. He inserted "Gentlemen" before "Are you ready?"

Having made the time of firing as brief as possible Kennett penciled this warning as a part of the tenth article to impress the principals with the necessity for quick action:

"Either party principal firing before the word 'fire' or after the word 'stop' shall forfeit his life at the discretion of the second of the opposite principal."

Two articles were added to the original draft made by Reynolds. One provided that "from and after the presentation of these proposals neither party shall practice in firing."

Quick  
Trigger  
Work  
Enforced

The last new article, which was designated the thirteenth, read: "With the view of enforcing these articles each party second shall be armed with an ordinary duelling pistol loaded with one ball."

Reynolds' original draft was amended by his second, was accepted by Mitchell and was signed by both seconds on the 23d, the day before Reynolds' formal acceptance of the challenge was delivered to Brown. Only one serious question arose afterwards, that was in relation to the size of the pistols. Brown had a larger weapon than Reynolds and Kennett thought he ought to use, under the terms of the agreement, but they waived objection.

In drafting the articles of agreement, Reynolds followed closely these rules of the code established in France:

"In pistol duels the nearest distance should be fifteen paces.

Reynolds

"The stand of each combatant to be decided by lot.

Followed

"It is desirable that the same pair of pistols be used by both parties.

Precedents

"The seconds shall load the pistols with the most scrupulous care and in the presence of each other.

## XIV

## THE SECONDS SATISFIED

Aug. 27th, 1856

Mr. F. Kennett.

Sir:

*The meeting which has just taken place between Mr. Brown and Mr. Reynolds brings conviction to my mind that they are both brave and honorable gentlemen.*

*Mr. Brown from his wound is unable to prosecute the matter further, even if he were so disposed. I therefore say to you that I, as the friend of Mr. Brown, am satisfied with the result of the meeting. I would suggest the propriety of the withdrawal of all communications between the parties of an offensive character, and that they shall hereafter meet and recognize each other as gentlemen.*

D. D. Mitchell.

*I concur in the above suggestion.*

Ferd. Kennett.

[Written on half a sheet of letter paper in pencil.  
Endorsed: "Correspondence of Col. Mitchell and Col. Kennett,  
on the Island opposite Selma, 27 Aug't, 1856."]

THE EXPLANATORY NARRATIVE

"The seconds have a right to ascertain that the principals do not carry any defense about their persons."

Kennett must have had strong reason for cutting down the time between the words "Fire—one—stop" from one minute to one second. That reason undoubtedly was the discovery by the second that his principal did not mean to shoot to kill, but had formed the deliberate intention to hit his adversary in the leg. Mr. Reynolds had practised at a mark and had confided his purpose to maim, but not to kill. The quicker the words were given the less danger there would be in Reynolds' plan.

Reynolds followed a not infrequent but a dangerous precedent when he determined to inflict a crippling but not mortal wound. Before Commodore Stephen Decatur went out to Bladensburg, a few miles from Washington, to meet Captain James Barron, also a naval officer, he confided to friends his purpose to lame only. He said he would shoot Barron in the hip. He did so, but he received Barron's bullet in the abdomen and died that night. Decatur was much averse to duelling. He endeavored to avoid the meeting, but Barron insisted. The difficulty was of thirteen years' standing. It began with the court-martial of Barron for surrendering his ship to permit a British frigate to search and take off deserters. Decatur was in the board which tried Barron.

The Brown-Reynolds duel occurred on the 26th of August. For some reason the indorsement in the official correspondence twice reads "27th August," although in one case it appears upon a note which is dated the 26th and which was sent just as the parties were proceeding "to the sandbar." Rather curiously the boat which stopped and brought the party from the sandbar to St. Louis was the "Editor."



# THE DUEL IN THE PAPERS

*Clippings of Local Reports and Comments  
Credited and Preserved by Reynolds*

## I

[Credited in pencil to the "Leader, 23 Aug't, 1856"]

*1856 Leader. 23 Aug't*  
**REMOVED DUEL.**—An exciting report has been current for the last twenty-four hours that Thomas C. Reynolds, Esq., and B. Gratz Brown, Esq., of the *Democrat*, had a hostile meeting yesterday morning, in which the latter was, according to various versions, wounded or killed. Mr. Reynolds was walking about town yesterday as if nothing had happened, and his friends, according to a morning paper, had no definite response to give to anxious enquirers, while their air was mysterious and surmise-provoking. For ourselves, we did not test their reticence by interrogation. The rumour is nearly as defunct as one of the principals was stated to be. The *Democrat* has preserved a dignified silence.

## II

[Credited in pencil to the "Herald, 23 Aug't, '56"]

*Herald 23 Aug't 56*  
**Reported Duel between Reynolds and Brown!**

On the street yesterday, the most intense excitement prevailed, occasioned by reports of a duel between Thomas C. Reynolds and B. Gratz Brown. Various conflicting accounts were given, but no one could be found who had been an eye witness to the meeting. Several of the personal friends of Mr. Reynolds were besieged by crowds of anxious individuals, eagerly inquiring for particulars; but no satisfaction was given—nothing but winks, shrugs and evasions of the most tantalizing character. Post office corner, the Custom House and the Herald office were thronged, and the excitement arose to fever heat. The murder of Thursday night ceased to be talked about—Kansas outrages were not listened to, and the Heron and Gibon quarrel was forgotten. The questions were—"When did they fight?" "Is Brown dead yet?"—"Where was he hit?" "Has Reynolds been arrested yet?"—and a thousand others, some of them exceedingly silly. Reynolds had been

seen on the street, dressed in duelling costume, and looking daggers—Lyttleton Cooke was also hobbing around with the air and pantaloons of a duello—Capt. Linn appeared to be harboring a deep secret, and Major Bryant put on his old Florida aspect, and appeared to have his eye skinned for Indian "sign." Local reporters were dodging around with ears wide open, and pencil in hand, ready to "take down" the first authentic narrative of the bloody encounter. The most prevalent report was, that the combatants had crossed over to Bloody Island at 4 o'clock yesterday morning, and at the first fire Brown had fallen, badly wounded. He had been left on the Illinois shore in charge of several physicians, and his recovery was considered extremely doubtful. How these reports originated, or whether there is any truth in them, we are unable to say. It is to be hoped that the difficulty known to exist between the two gentlemen has not terminated fatally to either party. A hostile meeting was certainly anticipated, but we cannot state positively that it has taken place.

THE EXPLANATORY NARRATIVE

Reynolds clipped from the papers of St. Louis all that was printed about the duel. On each clipping he marked the date of publication, and unless the printed matter showed the name of the paper he marked that also on the clipping. These newspaper scraps were preserved by Reynolds with the same care as the letters and all other writing having relation to the three controversies. They constitute not the least interesting exhibits of the duel embraced in the collection of Mr. Bixby.

In one respect the newspaper policy toward the duel was uniform. That was in space. This hostile meeting between the editor of one of the principal papers and a defeated candidate for Congress was treated with surprising brevity. Some of the reporters saw humor in the situation. Others were sympathetic to the extent of congratulations that results were not worse. There were premature announcements that the duel had taken place several days before the meeting. Rumor of a fatal ending was given currency. Editorial comment inclined to the view that duelling was to be condemned on general principles, but that public opinion of that day made it impossible to avoid an occasional resort to the code. Taken all together, the press notices of the duel serve to illustrate rather impressively how times have changed in journalism.

Newspaper  
Policy  
toward  
the Duel

The earliest newspaper rumors were that Brown and Reynolds were to meet on Bloody Island. This hazard by the St. Louis reporters was reasonable. Three fatalities on the cross marks gave Bloody Island the grewsome name it bore for more than fifty years. The sandbar opposite the northern end of the settlement of St. Louis showed above the river's surface at low water about 1799. It grew steadily, dividing the current. An increasing proportion of the river's volume each succeeding year passed down to the eastward of the sandbar. That part of the channel between the St. Louis water front and the western edge of the bar became narrower and shallower as time went on. The human voice carried across easily. Willows sprouted and grew in clumps and fringes. The new made strip of ground became known as "the Island." When there was need to distinguish it from others, St. Louisans of that generation spoke of "the island opposite Roy." On the St. Louis bank of the river near the foot of what afterwards became Ashley Street, named in honor of the fur trader and Congressman, a man named Roy built a large stone tower in which he operated a windmill. The tower stood on a curve of the shore line where it caught all of the breeze blowing up the river. Long after steam power came into use the dismantled stone tower was a conspicuous landmark. For twenty years or more "the island" so divided the current that neither side of the river claimed possession or exercised jurisdiction over it. This condition of no man's land favored the selection of "the island" for duels. And after three lives had

Bloody  
Island's  
Beginning

## III

[Credited in pencil to the "Leader, August 25th, '56"]

*Leader Local Intelligence*  
*August 25th '56*

**AFFAIR OF HONOUR.**—A report is current and very generally credited to-day that Messrs. Thos. C. Reynolds and B. Gratz Brown left the city yesterday evening for the purpose of a hostile meeting. The former gentleman is stated to be accompanied by Col. Mitchell and Col. F. Kennett, the latter by Mr. Leo Walker and Capt. Frost. The attendance of Dr. Shore as surgeon, is also said to be included in the arrangements. The scene selected for combat is variously stated as Devil's Island, St. Genevieve Island, and others, all agreeing that the locality is some one of the islands in the river below. There is also a rumour relative to the weapons and distance, viz., rifles at twenty yards; this is considered less reliable than the general fact. We have no definite information to communicate beyond the existence of the report.

## IV

[Credited in pencil to the "Leader, 26 Aug't, '56"]

*Leader. 26 Aug't '56*

**Local Intelligence.**

**THE RUMORED DUEL.**—Little doubt appears to be entertained that Messrs. Reynolds and Brown left the city for the purpose of fighting a duel at some point below. Selma, St. Genevieve, Devil's Island, and other points have been mentioned as the contemplated scene of action; and this morning is believed to have been the time of meeting; pistols the weapons; the distance twelve paces.

No definite information has or could have yet reached this city as to the particulars or the result, but a very improbable rumour to which no credence attaches, is that both principals are killed.

We stated yesterday that Capt. Frost was reported to be one of the seconds. That gentleman is in town to-day, and his recent admission into the Catholic Church would be quite sufficient reason for discrediting the report of his being engaged in an affair of this kind.

THE EXPLANATORY NARRATIVE

been sacrificed in these affairs public sentiment bestowed the title. Bloody Island vied with Bladensburg in Maryland for the distinction of being the principal "field of honor" in the United States. To Bladensburg, a few miles from the national capital, statesmen and officers of the army and navy and newspaper men of Washington resorted during two generations to settle differences by the code. Duelling on Bloody Island began as early as 1810. The record closed in 1860. The Farrar-Graham meeting was one of the earliest St. Louis duels, if it did not inaugurate the practice of early morning expeditions to Bloody Island. It illustrated one of the strangest phases of the code. The meeting of Graham and Farrar resulted from the rule that refusal to accept a challenge because the challenger was not a gentleman must be construed as an insult to the second bearing the challenge. The practice required the second to become a challenger on his own account. James A. Graham and Dr. Farrar were close personal friends in 1810. Graham was a looker-on at a game of cards being played in a hotel of St. Louis. He detected an army lieutenant in the act of cheating and called attention to it. The army officer declared he must have satisfaction. The next day Farrar called on his friend Graham and presented a challenge from the army officer, to whom he was related by marriage. Another rule of the code made it obligatory on a relative, when asked to do so, to act as second. Farrar could not decline to carry the message. Graham declined to fight a man he had exposed at the card table. The situation compelled Farrar to challenge Graham. The two young men crossed to Bloody Island and going through with the required preliminaries fired at each other three times. Both were wounded. Graham was injured in the spine so badly that he kept to his bed four months. After he became apparently convalescent the wound reopened. After he felt able to journey, Graham started to ride on horseback by easy stages to his old home in the East. When he had gone a hundred miles he failed suddenly and died.

Bloody  
Island  
Rivaled  
Bladens-  
burg

The last duel on Bloody Island was just before the outbreak of the civil war. The principals were General D. M. Frost and Edward B. Sayers, both well known in St. Louis and both afterwards in the Confederate army. Sayers was a civil engineer. He laid out Camp Jackson in the spring of 1861. He was active in the State militia. Frost was brigadier-general, commanding the militia of the St. Louis district. After the return of what was known as the Southwest Expedition, a movement of Missouri troops to Southwestern Missouri to meet expected troubles on the Kansas border, Sayers indulged in some criticism of General Frost. The latter went to Sayers' office, which was on Chestnut Street, near Second, and applied a horsewhip. Sayers challenged and Frost accepted. At the meeting on Bloody Island, Sayers missed and Frost fired in the air.

The  
Record  
Closed  
with a  
Bloodless  
Duel

## V

[From the Evening News with printed date, Tuesday evening, August 26th, 1856]

*News 26 Aug. 56*  
Reported by.

The city was rife yesterday and this morning with rumors of a duel about to be fought between B. Gratz Brown, editor of the Missouri Democrat, and Thos. C. Reynolds, United States District Attorney. The parties left the city yesterday, it is supposed, for the purpose of fighting. They had not returned this morning, nor have the gentlemen who are supposed to have been selected as their seconds. Mayor How yesterday in-

structed the police to be on the watch, and arrest the parties if they could be found.— Nothing, however, has yet been heard of the result of the "affair," which, if it was to have come off at all, probably came off this morning, at some considerable distance from the city. The reports about the weapons are various. Some declare that Mr. Brown was the challenger, and that rifles at ten paces were the terms on which the challenge was accepted. Others think pistols at twelve paces more probable.

## VI

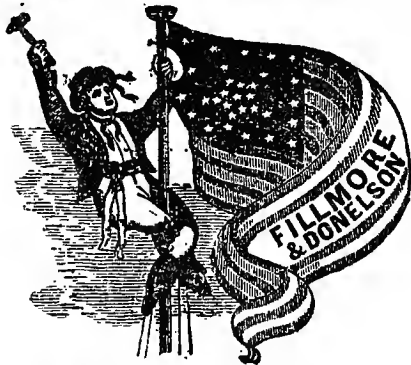
[From The Evening American with date, Tuesday evening, August 26th, 1856]

# THE EVENING AMERICAN.

Office No. 28 Chesnut street, between Second and Third.

Terms—10 cents a week—payable to the carriers.

TUESDAY EVENING, AUGUST 26, 1856.



AMERICAN TICKET.

FOR PRESIDENT,

**MILLARD FILLMORE.**

FOR VICE PRESIDENT,

**A. J. DONELSON.**

## ELECTORAL TICKET:

1st District,	James O. Broadhead, of Pike county.
2d "	Thomas L. Anderson, of Marion county.
3d "	James Rollins, of Boone county.
4th "	W. A. Cunningham, of Buchanan county.
5th "	Thomas P. Akers, of Lafayette county.
6th "	George W. Randolph, of Newton county.
7th "	William Carter, of Washington county.
8th "	D. L. Hawkins, of Cape Girardeau county.
9th "	Uriel Wright, of St. Louis county.

## THE DUEL BETWEEN BROWN AND REYNOLDS.

BROWN REPORTED KILLED—REYNOLDS WOUNDED.

We have received intelligence from undoubted authority that the duel between these gentlemen was fought late yesterday afternoon, on an island about thirty miles from the city, with pistols at 18 paces.

There were a number of friends of both parties on the ground. They left the city yesterday morning, the surgeon having preceded them with some of the seconds to the spot.

The dispatch received is that Mr. Brown was killed and Mr. Reynolds badly wounded in the shoulder.

We trust that the affair may not have eventuated so sadly, but we believe the intelligence to be perfectly authentic and correct.

THE EXPLANATORY NARRATIVE

The duels were fought on the upper part of Bloody Island. Usually the seconds selected a spot where willows and other growth screened the party so that the proceedings could not be seen from the St. Louis side. People assembled in numbers at and below Roy's. They occupied the windows and the house tops when it was known a duel was to be fought. They could not see much, but they could hear the shots and they were witnesses to the return of the parties from the meeting.

When St. Louis, to save the city's harbor, built a great dyke between Bloody Island and the Illinois mainland, the entire current was turned to the westward. This not only restored the depth of the channel along the St. Louis water front, but it wore away the western edge of the island. The river above the Eads Bridge became and remains considerably wider than it was in 1810-30, when the current was divided and when duels were frequent.

Henry S. Geyer and George H. Kennerly exchanged shots on Bloody Island. Their meeting took place in 1817. The terms were pistols at twelve paces. Kennerly was wounded in the leg so severely that he was lame the rest of his life. Both Geyer and Kennerly were quite young when their duel occurred. They became close friends afterwards, living to be among the foremost citizens of St. Louis. For both of them avenues were named.

A St. Louis  
Precedent  
for  
Reynolds'  
Aim

According to the late Judge T. T. Gantt, of St. Louis, who had the circumstances from the best possible source, Geyer withheld his fire. When Kennerly had fired and Geyer found himself unharmed, the latter pointed his pistol upward and discharged it. In this case the other principal demanded a second interchange. Geyer aimed to disable, but not to kill. He inflicted a not fatal wound. After Geyer's death Judge Gantt told the story of the duel and of the subsequent relations between the principals: "I have heard Mr. Geyer, without reference to his former relations of hostility to his opponent, speak of him as not only a man of high honor, but one of whom he cherished high regard."

Army officers stationed at or near St. Louis occasionally resorted to Bloody Island to settle differences. Captain Martin and Captain Ramsay, of the First United States Rifles, met on the cross marks in August, 1818. Ramsay was mortally wounded.

There were nine brothers and four sisters in the Rector family. They came west from Virginia and settled first in Kaskaskia, early establishing a wide reputation for physical courage. Several of the brothers served in the war of 1812 and received commissions. General William Rector was appointed surveyor-general of Illinois, Missouri and Arkansas. The family moved to St. Louis. An article charging the surveyor-general with bribery in connection with official duties appeared

When  
Rector  
Killed  
Joshua  
Barton

## VII

[Credited in pencil to "St. L. Herald, 26 Aug't, 1856"]

*St. L. Herald 26 Aug't*  
**RUMORED DUEL.**—It was rumored on our streets yesterday that T. C. Reynolds and B. Gratz Brown had gone down to an island about 30 miles below this city, opposite Selma, for the purpose of fighting a duel. Late in the evening it was rumored on the street, that Reynolds was shot in the shoulder. We are of opinion that there has been a hostile meeting in reality this time, but do not believe half the rumors about the affair. 1856

## VIII

[Credited to the "Republican, 27 Aug't, 1856," another clipping reproducing this, credited to the Pilot, same date]

*27 Aug't Republican*  
**THE DUEL.** 1856  
 The public expectation and curiosity in relation to an affair of honor between Messrs. REYNOLDS and BROWN, was relieved yesterday afternoon, by the arrival of the parties in this city. The meeting took place yesterday morning upon an island in the Mississippi, near Selma, about thirty miles below the city. Upon the first fire, Mr. BROWN was wounded just below the right knee. Mr. REYNOLDS was not hurt. The distance, we understand, was twelve paces, and the weapons pistols. We are glad the result was not worse. A reconciliation was effected between the two opposing gentlemen, and all the parties arrived here yesterday afternoon upon the steamer Editor.

THE EXPLANATORY NARRATIVE

in the *Missouri Gazette*. At the time General Rector was in Washington. It was the practice of the Rectors to make the affair of one the business of all. A demand was made upon the editor for the name of the writer, who was Joshua Barton. Thomas C. Rector, one of the younger members of the family, sent the challenge. The meeting took place on the island, June 20th, 1818. Usually these affairs on Bloody Island were set for early morning. Rector and Barton met about sundown. The weapons were pistols and the distance was ten paces. Barton was shot through the heart.

St. Louis newspaper reports of duels were, as a rule, quite brief. In 1837 the *Missouri Republican* disposed of one of these affairs in this manner:

Duel—A meeting took place yesterday a little before sundown on Bloody Island between Mr. William C. Skinner and Mr. William S. Meservey, of this city, in which the latter, on the first fire, received a flesh wound just below the knee. His antagonist escaped unhurt.

Joseph Charless, who established the first newspaper in St. Louis, was a fearless editor at short range. He did not hesitate to express editorial opinion on duels. When the fatal meeting between Benton and Lucas took place, this comment on the result appeared in the *Gazette*: "The infernal practice of duelling has taken off this morning one of the first characters in our country, Charles Lucas, Esq., attorney at law. His death has left a blank in society not easily filled up."

A Fearless  
Editor  
Who  
Fought no  
Duels

At one time Mr. Charless was threatened with incendiarism because of some vigorous editorials in the *Gazette*. Apparently as a result of the rumors that the editor was to be burned out, the *Gazette* published this: "D. Kimball requests the incendiaries of St. Louis to defer burning Mr. Charless' establishment until his removal, which will be on the 20th of April next." While walking in his garden, Mr. Charless was fired upon but was not hit.

The affair with Congressman John Scott was a newspaper sensation which continued some weeks in St. Louis. The *Gazette* printed several articles on Scott, who denounced them and demanded the name of the author. Threats were made, to which Mr. Charless replied: "I may be threatened, but I will continue an independent course. If I am attacked for exercising the honest duties of my profession, I know how to repel injury." That was in 1816. Mr. Charless at length gave Mr. Scott the names of the writers of the articles. There were five highly respectable citizens involved. Scott challenged each of them. Firman A. Rozier's version of John Scott's wholesale appeal to the code was this:

Hon. John  
Scott's  
Challenge  
of Five

During the time that he was a candidate for Congress, there were written by some correspondents, who were his political enemies, severe strictures upon his character, in the *Gazette*, published in St. Louis. He demanded of Mr. Charless, the editor, the names of the authors, which were given him. Next morning, whilst in St. Louis, through General Henry Dodge, and that before breakfast, he challenged to mortal combat five

**MORNING HERALD.****TERMS:**

DAILY HERALD, per week.....10 cents.  
 " " yearly.....\$5 00  
 SUNDAY (WEEKLY) HERALD, per year..... 2 00

PUBLISHED EVERY MORNING (MONDAYS EXCEPTED).

**St. Louis:**

WEDNESDAY MORNING, AUGUST 27.

## IX

*From the Morning Herald, with printed date,  
 August 27th, 1856]*

**Duel between Thomas C. Reynolds and  
 B. Gratz Brown—Brown Wounded in  
 the Leg!—Great Excitement!**

We are enabled at length to give authentic particulars of the duel between Messrs. Reynolds and Brown, rumors of which were in circulation throughout the city yesterday. The parties met on an island opposite Selma, about thirty miles below the city. Col. Ferd. Kenneit and Capt. T. B. Hudson were the seconds of Reynolds, and Dr. Shore, surgeon. Col. D. D. Mitchell and Leo Walker acted for Brown. The weapons chosen were duelling pistols—distance, twelve paces. All parties, principals and seconds, are said to have behaved with great coolness and firmness. The distance was measured off—the combatants took their positions—the word was given, and both weapons went off at the same time. Mr. Brown was struck just below the cartilage of the knee, and was carried from the field. The duel was fought early yesterday morning. Shortly afterwards, the whole party took passage on the steamer Editor, and reached the city yesterday afternoon. Mr. Brown was conveyed home in a carriage, being so badly hurt that he had to be lifted into the house. Mr. Reynolds was uninjured.

On the arrival of the boat, there was a rush of policemen on board, the Mayor having ordered the parties to be arrested. As there had been no breach of City Ordinance, however, the police could make no arrests, and after bustling about for a while, they went away, and permitted the fighting men to go home to their families.

We are glad that this affair has not terminated more fatally. We suppose the point of honor has been adjusted, and the challenger has received his modicum of "satisfaction." We do not hesitate to express our disapprobation of the whole "code of honor." It is a relic of barbarism, disgraceful to an intelligent and enlightened people. But, from what we have seen and heard since the beginning of the difficulty between the parties who have just returned from the field, we are convinced that public sentiment demanded a resort to deadly weapons. Public opinion is therefore responsible for whatever disgrace may be attached to this duel. We hope it will be the last we shall have to record, and that some other mode of adjusting quarrels will be resorted to.

## THE EXPLANATORY NARRATIVE

of these correspondents, amongst whom were Hon. Rufus Easton, delegate from Missouri territory, Mr. Lucas, afterwards killed in a duel by Benton, Dr. Simpson, and others whose names are not now remembered. They all declined with the exception of Lucas. The difficulty with Lucas was afterwards compromised through friends. Hon. Rufus Easton's reply to him in declining to fight was, "I do not want to kill you, and if you were to kill me I would die as the fool dieth."

Scott had a stormy political career. He was the single representative from Missouri when the Presidential election was thrown into the House of Representatives after the election of 1824. He cast the vote of Missouri for Adams as against Jackson and was retired to private life by his constituents. This did not affect his health. Scott lived to be fourscore. As he grew old he wore his long white hair in a queue, which sometimes hung down his shoulders and other times was bunched at the back of his head, held in place with a comb. On one side Scott wore a dirk and on the other a pistol, when he appeared in court or in any public place. As long as he lived he maintained this habit of going armed. When he made a collection of money for a client he put the money in the form received into a buckskin bag, marked the bag with the name of the owner and kept it intact until delivery was made. Another thing for which Scott was famous was his profanity. In that respect he was considered the most fluent citizen of Ste. Genevieve.

Public sentiment in St. Louis grew strong against duelling. In 1823 the *Missouri Republican* voiced this sentiment when it said: "Two more persons have been killed in duels near St. Louis. Their names are Messrs. Waddle and Crow. It must be a vicious state of society in which the pistol is the umpire in every controversy."

Public  
Sentiment  
of  
St. Louis  
on  
Duelling

Rev. Timothy Flint, who came out to St. Louis in 1816 and held a pastorate, wrote back to his brother, Rev. James Flint of Salem, Mass., that the practice of duelling was confined to a small class:

In the towns of the upper country on the Mississippi, and especially in St. Louis, there is one species of barbarism that is but too common. I mean the horrid practice of duelling. Be it remembered this is the barbarism only of that small class that denominate themselves "the gentlemen." It cannot be matter of astonishment that these are common here when we recollect that the fierce and adventurous spirits are naturally attracted to these regions, and that it is a common proverb of the people that when we cross the Mississippi, "we travel beyond the Sabbath."

How the  
Code Im-  
pressed  
New-  
comers

It would lead me to such personalities as I mean to avoid were I to give you details, and my views of the fatal duels, of which there were so many while I was here. I can only say that I lost in this dreadful way two individuals with whom I had personal intercourse and from whom I had received many kindnesses. One of them was one of the most promising and apparently one of the most sober and moral young men of the State, the hope of his family and the prop of the old age of his father. All that fell were men in office, of standing and character. I am not here going to start a dissertation upon the trite subject of duelling, the most horrible and savage relic of a barbarous age. If anything could disgust reasoning beings with

## X

[Credited in pencil to "St. L. Leader,  
27 Aug't, '56"]

*St. L. Leader. 27 Augt '56.*

## Local Intelligence.

**THE DUEL FOUGHT.**—Yesterday afternoon, about 4 o'clock, the steamer Editor arrived from Memphis, bringing from Selma the principals and seconds of the duelling party. The meeting occurred yesterday morning on an island opposite Selma, about thirty miles below this city. Thos. C. Reynolds, Esq., was attended by Col. Ferd. Kennett and Capt. Thos. B. Hudson. His antagonist, B. Gratz Brown, Esq., by Col. D. D. Mitchell and Mr. Leo Walker. Dr. Shore was in attendance as surgeon.

The weapons selected were duelling pistols, distance twelve paces. The parties being placed, fired at the word, and Mr. Brown received his opponent's ball in the right leg below the knee. Mr. Reynolds was unhurt. The affair was here terminated, the wounded combatant being carried from the field. It is hoped that the injury will not prove permanently serious; it may however be tedious and painful, as the ball is said to have glanced round the patella or cap of the knee, grazing the periosteum or covering membrane of the bone, which is a highly sensitive tissue, liable to acute inflammation. A reconciliation was effected before the parties left the ground, and they conversed during the subsequent passage in the most cordial manner.

On the arrival of the boat, there was a rush of policemen on board, the Mayor having ordered the parties to be arrested. As there had been no breach of City Ordinance, however, the police could make no arrests, and after bustling about for a while, they went away, and permitted the fighting men to go home to their families.

## XI

[Credited in pencil to the *Intelligencer*, the date of August 22d in pencil being a mistake]

*Intelligencer*

**A Duel.**—For some days past, rumors have been rife on the streets with regard to a hostile meeting expected to take place between B. Gratz

Brown, Esq., Editor of the *Democrat*, and Thos. C. Reynolds, Esq., U. S. District Attorney. Yesterday, it became generally known that the parties, accompanied by their seconds, a few friends, and a surgeon, had left the city on Monday, with the design of bringing matters to a termination. A meeting did take place. The scene was an island in the Mississippi, opposite Selma, some forty miles below this city. Eight o'clock yesterday morning was the hour, pistols the weapons, twelve paces the distance. But one fire was exchanged. Mr. Reynolds was unhurt, and Mr. Brown received a flesh wound below the knee joint. The affair terminated here, and the party returned yesterday evening, on the steamer Editor. *27 Augt '56*

## XII

[Credited in pencil to the *Anzeiger*,  
"27 Aug't, '56"]

(Das Duell. Das vielbesprochene große, blutige Duell, welches in den letzten Tagen St. Louis und die nächsten Dörfer in Spannung hielt, ist, wie wir aus guter Quelle vernehmen, endlich ausgefochten worden und wir haben die angenehme Pflicht melden zu können, daß es ohne großen Schaden abgelaufen ist. Man schlug sich auf einer Insel in der Nähe von Salina, der Besitzung von Hrn. Ferd. Kennett, etwa 30 Meilen von St. Louis, halbwegs St. Genevieve. Die Waffe war die Pistole, die Distanz 15 Schritte.

Einer der Kämpfer erhielt eine Fleischwunde unterhalb des Knies. Die Kugel gerubte das Bein zu verschonen, so daß die Wunde durchaus ungefährlich ist.

Wir bedauern, daß unsere Partei bei solchen Vorfällen regelmäßig von der Glücksgöttin nicht begünstigt wird und gratuliren im Uebrigen männiglich zu der Erlösung von dieser bössartigen Duell Spannung.

Man versichert uns schließlich, daß beiderseits Courage und kaltes Blut entwickelt und jedem Kämpfer pflichtschuldigst die Anerkennung von Freund und Feind zu Theil wurde. *Aug. 27. Augt '56*

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THE EXPLANATORY NARRATIVE

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this dreadful practice it would be to have seen its frequency and its terminations and consequences in this region.

The growing sentiment in St. Louis against duelling found ways of manifesting itself. In November, 1836, William Greenleaf Eliot, who created Washington University, came to St. Louis to live—a young man, a Unitarian minister just ordained. One of his first letters to friends "back east" contained this:

"We had a duel here yesterday between two young fools, lawyers. Neither hurt and will probably fight again. If I can do it incog. I mean to give them a basting in the way of the ridiculous."

Leo Walker, one of Brown's seconds, was of South Carolina birth. He was connected by marriage with an old St. Louis family. Thomas B. Hudson, one of Reynolds' seconds, was a Tennessean. His experience as a principal on the cross marks qualified him to be a "friend." Soon after beginning the practice of law in St. Louis Hudson entered politics. He became a member of the city council, the city counselor, a member of the legislature, and ran for Congress as an anti-Benton candidate. In 1840 there was held a Democratic Van Buren rally at Creve Coeur Lake, in St. Louis County. Hudson was one of the speakers. A disturbance of serious character interrupted the meeting. Some correspondent wrote an account of the trouble for a St. Louis paper and signed the communication "Veritas." In the course of the description of the row Hudson was given credit for "bold and fearless conduct." The *Missouri Republican* was supporting the Whig candidate for President, William Henry Harrison. It published a communication upon the Creve Coeur meeting, intimating that Hudson was "Veritas," and that he had described himself as a hero. The *Republican* went further, editorially endorsing the communication and saying:

Hudson's  
Duelling  
Record

"We have the word of several gentlemen, and some of them Loco-focos, saying that a more disgraceful, unbecoming proceeding has not transpired during the canvass than this was. We particularly invite the attention of the author of 'Veritas,' reported to be the 'bold and fearless Mr. Hudson,' to this communication."

The attention was given quickly. Hudson challenged Adam Black Chambers. The editor of the *Republican* accepted. The duel was fought with rifles at forty paces. It took place on Bloody Island in the early morning. Hudson was accompanied by Charles Bent and John H. Watson. Chambers' friends were Martin Thomas and W. Gordon. Three times the word was given and the rifles were discharged. Nobody was hurt. The seconds refused to permit any more shooting. Principals, seconds and surgeons came back to St. Louis, went to the residence of Colonel Chambers,

## XIII

[From the "Saint Louiser Volksblatt" with printed date "Mittwoch, den 27. August, 1856"]

## Saint Louiser Volksblatt.

Mittwoch, den 27. August 1856. — No. 106.

### Witterungsbericht

vom 26. August von J. Blattner.

Uhr.	Wind.	Barometer.	Thermometer.
9	Nord	29.66	8. 64. N. 14
12		29.66	" 72. " 18
3	Nordost	29.66	" 77. " 20

Vorgestern bereits sprach man von einem Duell, welches wahrscheinlich bald zwischen Graf Brown, dem Redakteur des „Missouri Demokrat,“ und Thomas J. Reynolds, Ver. Staaten Anwalt und demokratischem Congressabgeordneten von St. Louis stattfinden sollte, doch wurde allgemein gehofft, daß sich die zwischen beiden Herrn schwankenden Streitfragen ohne dieses extreme Mittel beilegen ließen. Leider war dies nicht der Fall. Gestern Nachmittag trafen die genannten Herrn mit ihren Sekundanten auf dem Editor von Selma hier ein, wo sie sich gestern Morgen mit Pistolen auf 18 Schritte duellirten. Hr. Brown soll stark am Bein verwundet sein; Hr. Reynolds ist unbeschädigt.

## XIV

[Editorial from the St. Louis Leader, with caption and date "Wednesday Evening, August 27, 1856"]

## ST. LOUIS LEADER.

ST. LOUIS:

WEDNESDAY EVENING, AUGUST 27, 1856.

**THE DUEL.**—The public mind is well content that the affair of honour between Messrs. Reynolds and Brown has passed out without loss of life to either. We must condemn the code which required this mortal risk, while we acknowledge that as society is constituted in this country, an incidental benefit may arise from it, of restraining that violence of language, and those unscrupulous misrepresentations, which disgrace our political contests. To our apprehension it does not render a liar a man of honour, that he has risked his life in con-

sequence of his slander, but the opinion of the world, which requires him to wipe out the imputation of falsehood by blood, or at least by exposing his own to be shed, is doubtless a partial restraint upon some men. We doubt, for all that, whether the duel is of so much use in that respect as is generally supposed. It may operate the other way, and encourage men in wilful defamation, on the plea that they are ready to atone for it by a pistol-shot. Besides men who either lack courage to fight, or are restrained from fighting by principle, are thus left without defence, and may be slandered with impunity, as well by the coward, as by the man who unites the absence of moral principle with the not rare quality of physical courage.

We do not consider, therefore, that duelling is justifiable, even apart from the prohibition of the Church, on the ground usually assigned. The only practical difficulty we have in the matter, is how to reconcile a state of society in which duelling is not recognized as the ultimate appeal among gentlemen, with the existence of high spirit and chivalrous sentiment in the bosom of that society. We are free to confess that we see no *natural* alternative between admitting the duel and establishing a society of mean-spirited poltroons, insensible to the point of honour, and in which all personal protection being left to pecuniary damages or the servile punishment of imprisonment, mercantile honour itself gradually disappears, and the name of gentleman becomes a myth. It is the supernatural grace of Christianity alone, that can solve this difficulty. The vision of the world unseen which nerves the martyr to sustain the death of lingering agony before which the boldest duellist would quail, reconciles the forgiveness of injuries, and the patient endurance of insult, with manly courage. A true Christian can be brave, yet not avenge himself, when no other man can; and nothing can put a stop to duelling without degrading society, except the spirit of the Divinely organized and supernatural society. It is not even sufficient that as an individual you are brave—that does not enable you to decline the duel—I do not say without injury to yourself, but without lowering the tone of society. You must belong to a society instinct with courage, and whose history is that of men and women and even children, disdaining tortures and death in comparison with a single act of disobedience to the most refined standard of virtue. Identified with such a society, you may and must decline single combat on personal grounds, as a brave soldier would decline it, who is about to risk his life in the breach for his country.

THE EXPLANATORY NARRATIVE

and passed the rest of the day in banqueting. The seconds joined in a card to the newspapers stating that the principals had acted with coolness and bravery.

The enthusiasm with which St. Louisans went into the Mexican War anticipated the action of the government at Washington. Senator Benton wrote home from the national capital that an "Army of the West" was to be organized to march overland to Santa Fe. General Stephen Watts Kearny received authority to assemble at Fort Leavenworth three hundred United States dragoons and one thousand mounted volunteers, the rough riders of 1846. St. Louis was not asked, was not expected to furnish any part of the "Army of the West;" but the Laclede Rangers, one hundred strong, uniformed and mounted, took passage on the *Pride of the West*, and proceeded up the Missouri to join Kearny. Not only did these Laclede Rangers, composed of the flower of St. Louis youth, go uninvited by the United States government, but the officers held no commissions of any kind until the boat stopped at Jefferson City, when they were recognized by the State. The rangers disembarked at Fort Leavenworth with their military status so ill-defined that the quartermaster could issue no government rations, and the command slept supperless the first night.

The  
Laclede  
Rangers

General Kearny not only accepted the rangers but mustered them into the dragoons, making them a part of the regiment of regulars. The march across the plains was the prelude to brilliant service. When Doniphan sent Mitchell hundreds of miles through hostile country to "open communication with Chihuahua," the Laclede Rangers comprised the larger part of the little advance guard. And when, after the taking of Chihuahua, it was found that the American General, Wool, had not arrived there, the Laclede Rangers led the "Army of the West" nine hundred miles across the table-land of Mexico and joined General Zachary Taylor near Saltillo. This marching and fighting of the "Army of the West" thrilled the whole country. The captain of the Laclede Rangers was Thomas B. Hudson, one of the seconds in the Brown-Reynolds duel.

As the clippings reproduced in facsimile show, the newspapers gave no undue space to the Brown-Reynolds duel. They did not "sensationalize" the affair. They did not devote to it much editorial comment.

A notable exception to the general press treatment was a moral view of duelling, which appeared in the *Leader*, an afternoon paper, the day after the return of the party to St. Louis. This treatment of the subject was given place in the editorial columns, but it was not written in newspaper style. There are internal evidences that the article was furnished by somebody outside of the newspaper profession.

The  
Press  
Treatment

In the record book of the Missouri Historical Society, with date of

## XV

[Credited in pencil to the "Evening News, 27 Aug't"]

with but three votes against it, and one of the strongest advocates was a gentleman who was engaged in the manufacture of the prohibited article.

*Evening News 27 Aug't*  
*That Duel.*—The long talked of duel between Mr. Thomas C. Reynolds and B. Gratz Brown, has come off at last. The sun rose as usual the next day, and the Mississippi still runs down stream. The particulars, as nearly as we can learn them, are as follows: The parties met yesterday morning, about 8 o'clock, at an island opposite Selma, about 30 miles below this city, and fought with pistols at twelve paces. On the first fire Mr. Brown was wounded in the leg, just below the knee, the ball barely grazing the bone. He was immediately carried off the ground, and the affair ended by the principals swearing eternal friendship. Mr. Reynolds was untouched, Col. Ferd. Kennett and Captain T. B. Hudson acted for the latter, and Col. D. D. Mitchell and Mr. Leo Walker for Mr. Brown. Dr. John Shore attended as surgeon. In the evening the whole party returned to this city on the steamer Editor.

## XVI

[Credited in pencil "Tages Cronik, 28 Aug't, '56"]

*Tages Cronik*  
 Das Duell. Seit einigen Tagen circulirte in der Stadt das Gerücht, daß die Hh. Thos. C. Reynolds und Gratz Brown sich gefordert und sich duelliren würden; doch waren wir bis dahin außer Stande, Bestimmtes darüber mitzutheilen, und schwiegen deshalb davon. Doch jetzt erfahren wir, daß das Duell wirklich stattgefunden hat und zwar auf einer Insel im Mississippi, in der Nähe von Selma, ungefähr 30 Meilen von hier. Herr Gratz Brown wurde beim ersten Feuern an dem rechten Knie ver-

wundet, während Herr Reynolds unverletzt blieb. Hierauf gelang es den beiderseitigen Sekundanten die feindlichen Parteien zu versöhnen, worauf sie mit dem Dampfschiffe „Editor“ hierher zurückkehrten. Das Duell fand mit Pistolen auf 12 Schritte Distanz statt.

Die Sekundanten des Herrn Reynolds waren Col. Ferd. Kennett und Capt. L. B. Hudson; die des Herrn Brown Col. D. D. Mitchell und Leo Walker. Dr. John Shore war als Wundarzt mitgenommen worden. *28. Aug't. '56*

## THE EXPLANATORY NARRATIVE

April 1, 1887, two days after the death of Reynolds, Oscar W. Collet, a writer of local history, penned his personal recollection of circumstances closely related to the meeting thirty-one years before:

The duel grew out of a statement in the *Democrat*, a paper edited by Brown, which Reynolds considered a reflection on his personal integrity. Brown, called upon to retract or justify the publication, gave as his authority a person living in the interior of the State. This gentleman was hunted up and like demand made of him. He denied having furnished the statement circulated by the *Democrat*. Brown, deserted by his informant, had to assume the responsibility, though I really believe he received from someone what he published. "I do not see," said the late William McKee, who managed the *Democrat*, to me, "how under the circumstances Brown can avoid Reynolds' demand for satisfaction." And he did not, naming rifles as the weapon, which Reynolds refused point blank to accept on account of his near-sightedness, a notorious fact. Some little time passed and a second challenge was sent, this time by Brown. The duel was not fought with rifles, but with pistols, the antagonists, contrary to what I believe is the custom, firing on the drop, not the rise. It did not take place on Bloody Island, which had ceased to be an island, but on a sandbar opposite Selma. The party went from St. Louis to Ferd. Kennett's and thence crossed the river in skiffs. Reynolds was dressed in ashy gray colored clothes; Brown, unwisely, in black, which, strongly relieved by a background of sand, made him a conspicuous, sharply defined mark. Reynolds was a remarkably good and quick shot. He had been concerned in a duel in Virginia, which was the cause of his removal to St. Louis, he being disbarred by the act. Gus Linn, who went out to practice with him, told me at the time that Reynolds could put a ball inside of the ring of a tin cup at every fire without missing once, and that he, Linn, was sure Gratz Brown would be killed. There was no practising at dummy's legs, nor was a dummy used for any purpose, as far as I know. The wounding in the leg was premeditated. Reynolds applied to Armstrong to act as his second. Armstrong declined on the ground that being a United States officer it was improper, but referred him to Ferd. Kennett. Reynolds then told Armstrong that he did not intend to kill Brown, but mark him in such a way that it would be a lesson for life. He was the only person to whom this intention was made known. Armstrong remonstrated with him on the folly of such an intention, but Reynolds replied that he meant to take care of himself and was fully satisfied of his competency to do so; but if a second shot was required his antagonist must take the consequences. Brown fell on his back, and as he lay on the sand demanded a second shot. His second, D. D. Mitchell, would not listen to the demand, which he termed preposterous. Brown did not send the challenge of his own accord; that is, he was egged on to it by others. What relates to D. H. Armstrong in the above I have from himself; also what relates to D. D. Mitchell. He tells me that Mitchell told him at the time that Brown was forced into challenging Reynolds and that the ground was a foolish one.

A contribution by William H. Swift to the reminiscences of the duel indicates the origin of the tradition that Reynolds practised on a dummy:

I was told by Colonel Dave Armstrong that he was selected as the second for Reynolds. However, passing a pistol gallery, he saw Reynolds being coached by Captain Paul, then the most expert pistol shot in the West. Reynolds was practising upon a sketch of a man on the blackboard of about the size of Brown, aiming at his leg below the knee,

## XVII

[Credited in pencil "Revue de l'Ouest, 30 Aug., '56"]

*Revue de l'Ouest**30 Aug 56*  
UN DUEL.

C'est très beau, disait un géomètre en sortant de l'Opéra; mais qu'est-ce que cela prouve? — C'est horrible, dirons-nous à notre tour en parlant du duel, et qu'est-ce que cela prouve? Le bruit d'une affaire d'honneur entre deux citoyens de St Louis a été l'un des principaux sujets de conversation pendant cette semaine. M. Reynolds, attorney de district des Etats-Unis, et M. Brown, éditeur du *Democrat*, sont allés vider une vieille querelle à trente milles de cette ville. L'arme était le pistolet; la distance, quinze pas. M. Brown a reçu la balle de son adversaire un peu au-dessous du genou, et l'affaire s'est terminée là.

Maintenant, nous nous permettons encore de le demander: qu'est-ce que cela prouve? Cette balle logée par M. Reynolds dans la jambe de M. Brown démontre-t-elle qu'il a raison et que son

système politique est le meilleur? Elle montre tout au plus qu'il l'emporte en adresse ou qu'il a la main un peu plus ferme. Mais qui voudrait s'exposer à tuer son semblable ou à se faire tuer, simplement pour mettre en évidence une supériorité aussi puérile? Il faut qu'il y ait dans le duel une philosophie bien profonde pour que des peuples aussi avancés en civilisation et des hommes aussi éclairés maintiennent cette coutume en honneur. Mais nous avouons notre impuissance à découvrir ce sens caché. Que les malheureux soumis aux seules lois de la force brutale et de la ruse soient entraînés par leurs passions à s'entre-déchirer, c'est tout naturel. Mais il nous a toujours semblé que des hommes voués au culte de l'intelligence et du progrès social pouvaient vider leurs différends d'une manière plus rationnelle, en les soumettant au grand jury de l'opinion publique. Nous nous trompons sans doute, et la métaphysique du pistolet a des mystères que notre esprit ne peut sonder.

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and hitting it every shot. Colonel Dave asked Reynolds why he did not shoot at the heart instead of the leg. Reynolds replied that he wanted to make Brown limp the rest of his life and that he didn't desire to kill him. Armstrong told Reynolds that he would not go out with him on the field unless he shot to kill; that he wasn't going to have a friend stand up with a chance of being killed unless he took the same precaution for himself. As Reynolds would not consent, Armstrong refused to act further as second.

To Brown the duel was an incident in a strenuous editorial and political career. To Reynolds it was an event of his life. The preparation of the correspondence, the practice with the pistol, the consultations with friends, the consideration of every detail, the preservation of these newspaper clippings—all go to show how much more the three controversies meant to Reynolds than they did to Brown.



## AFTER THE DUEL

*The Career of Brown and Reynolds—Benton's  
Lament for Lucas and for “All of These Scenes.”*

## RECOLLECTIONS OF AN ADVISER

Isaac H. Sturgeon was one of the friends with whom Reynolds consulted during the controversies with Brown. A few years before his death, Mr. Sturgeon, at the request of William Vincent Byars, wrote his reminiscences of the affair. His manuscript is included in the Bixby collection. Mr. Sturgeon's memory was at fault only in regard to the distance condition in the second controversy. Brown prescribed eighty, not sixty, paces.

A sharp and bitter newspaper controversy had been going on for some time [1854-6] between Governor Brown and Governor Reynolds (both warm personal friends of Isaac H. Sturgeon), when Governor Reynolds challenged Governor Brown. Brown selected rifles—at sixty paces, as I recollect. Reynolds refused to fight on these terms as he was near-sighted, and at this distance could not see his antagonist. So the duel was off, for the time; but Reynolds kept up his attacks on Brown until Brown challenged Reynolds. As soon as Reynolds got the challenge from Brown, he hunted me up and said: "I have a great favor to ask of you." I at once said: "I shall be glad to serve you if I can." Then he related how he had to decline fighting on the terms made when he challenged Brown. "Now," said he, "I have just received a challenge from Brown and I am afraid of being arrested, and if the duel is prevented by my being arrested, it will ruin me. As I did not fight when I challenged, many might charge cowardice and think that I had got myself arrested. So to avert this probability of arrest, I felt that if you would grant me the hospitality of your house while negotiations went on for arranging the fight, no one would suspect my being at your house and thus I would be secure from arrest."

I told him to come and that with my brother, Thomas L. Sturgeon, we would do all we could for the comfort of himself and his seconds, who I think, were Captain Thomas B. Hudson and Colonel Ferd. Kennett. I do not with certainty recollect Governor Brown's seconds.

I and Colonel D. H. Armstrong acted somewhat as counselors to Governor Reynolds and his seconds. The duel was fought at sunrise on the Mississippi River, opposite Colonel Ferd. Kennett's home. Governor Reynolds slept at my house the night before he was to go down to fight. Governor Reynolds slept soundly, for I had to knock twice to arouse him, and after the fight he reminded me of how well he had slept the night before.

Governor Reynolds arranged with me that I should be at the telegraph office at sunrise on the morning of the fight to get the first news and convey it to Mrs. Reynolds. The home of Governor and Mrs. Reynolds was then on Olive Street, near where the Exposition building stands. I was at the office of the telegraph company, then on the northeast corner of Olive and Third Streets, by sunrise, and then I waited until eight o'clock a. m., or a little later and no news came. So I quickly ran up to see Mrs. Reynolds, fearing she would think the news bad and that kept me from coming. I told her to be composed, that I would certainly come to her at once, no matter what the news was, as soon as any came. I got back to the office and had not long to wait until Governor Reynolds telegraphed me: "The duel has been fought; Brown slightly wounded just below the knee; I am not hurt." Governor Brown insisted on a second fire which his seconds refused to allow. Through the intervention of the seconds on both sides, Brown and Reynolds made friends on the ground and were ever thereafter good friends.

When I got back to Mrs. Reynolds to tell her the result of the fight, I lost no time.

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She was sitting composed, but under a fearful strain, and I said at once: "The news is good; the duel has been fought; your husband is unhurt and Mr. Brown slightly wounded below the knee." Her heart was at once overwhelmed with gratitude to God and she wept tears of joy for a long time. It was most touching and I could not help shedding tears in sympathy with her.

I think I also told her that Governor Brown and her husband became friends before they left the field, which was a comfort to her. In after years when this good Christian Catholic wife died (she was a Spanish lady of great refinement) I was one of her pallbearers. When the Civil War came on, Governor Reynolds and all the Federal officeholders [in St. Louis] took the Southern side. I alone remained loyal to the Union, and my letters to President Buchanan and General Winfield Scott brought the first troops to St. Louis to protect the arms at the arsenal and the treasure in my hands as United States Assistant Treasurer.

When the war was over and Governor Reynolds returned to St. Louis, our old friendship was renewed. I never allowed any difference in politics to mar or disturb my personal regard for friends, and when my friend, Governor Reynolds, died, I was one of his pallbearers. He was buried at the side of his first wife. He married late in life a second time.

ISAAC H. STURGEON.

## PASSING OF BENTON AND THE CODE

The passing of the code at St. Louis and the passing of Benton in St. Louis politics were coincident. The last duel, with bloodshed, between St. Louisans was fought in the month that Benton went down to final defeat at the polls.

The term "Bentonites" was applied commonly to the men who created the *Missouri Democrat*. It became a misnomer following the last duel and the last defeat. Senator Benton had made his fight to suppress the issue of slavery. He had lost. The question of slavery extension into the territories would not down. By the Missouri Legislature it had been raised squarely in the winter of 1849. "The Jackson Resolutions" had been adopted. "The Softs," as the Anti-Benton wing of the Democratic party in Missouri was called, had shown that they were in the large majority of that party. They had declared that their sympathies and their interests were with the Southern States on the slavery question. Benton had appealed from the legislature to the people, had campaigned the State as never before and had been beaten at the polls. In 1851 Benton was denied re-election to the Senate. He received fifty votes in the legislature; the Anti-Benton Democrats permitted the election of a Whig after prolonged balloting, rather than vote for Benton. In 1852 Benton offered himself for the House of Representatives and was elected. But two years later he was defeated for that position. In 1855 Benton received for senator only forty votes in the Missouri Legislature. There was a deadlock and the legislature adjourned, leaving the State with only one senator. In 1856 Benton was so badly beaten for governor that it was evident even to him that his following had scattered.

In those successive campaigns the men who had supported Benton were drifting farther and farther from his policy, even while they went through the forms of loyalty to his personality. They were realizing and recognizing that the slavery issue could not be ignored in discussion, or kept out of political campaigns. Benton clung to the hope of continued compromise. Blair and Brown regarded it as forlorn. The *Missouri Democrat* grew more and more pronounced in its Free Soil declarations. Even while Benton contributed editorials, the paper discussed, on the editorial page, gradual emancipation, and pointed out that slavery was an increasing handicap to the industrial development of St. Louis. The political vision of the young men who were conducting the *Democrat* was more accurate than that of Benton. The great personality of Benton, and his long, aggressive service in public life, made him interesting, but of decreasing force in politics after 1850. A period of six years with three defeats at the polls brought the complete collapse of that domination through personal leadership.

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Blair and Brown had not only foreseen, but were welcoming the issue raised by the pro-slavery wing of their party. Benton's eyes were finally opened with his defeat for governor in 1856. He not only realized the strength of the "nullifiers," as he called the pro-slavery Democrats, but he saw that there was no longer a Benton party and a Benton organ. He wrote from Washington to a personal friend in St. Louis, under February date, 1857:

Many friends told me that these persons (Blair & Co.) would turn out for Abolition in the State as soon as the election was over; but I would not believe such a thing. For persons calling themselves my friends to attack the whole policy of my life, which was to keep slavery agitation out of the State, and get my support in the canvass by keeping me ignorant of what they intended to do, is the greatest outrage that I have ever experienced. Those who have done it have never communicated one word to me in justification or explanation of their conduct; for it is something they can neither explain nor justify.

I wish you to get the *St. Louis Democrat*, change its name and character—for no useful paper can now ever be made out of it. I will be in St. Louis in April and assist you. The paper is given up to the slavery subject, agitating State emancipation against my established and known policy. They ought to have told me before the election what they intended to do; if they had I should not have supported their ticket. They had no right to make me, by concealing that fact, a supporter of an emancipation ticket (the same in effect as Abolition) against the known policy of my life, and it will produce a complete separation between us.

## BENTON DIED REGRETTING DUELS

Bound into some copies of the "Thirty Years' View" issued after his death, was an autobiographical sketch of Benton, written by him, a note said, "while he was suffering excruciating pain from the disease that, a few weeks later, closed his earthly career." In that sketch, referring to himself in the third person, as was his custom, Benton wrote this of the Lucas affair:

"A duel at St. Louis ended fatally, of which Colonel Benton has not been heard to speak except among intimate friends, and to tell of the pang which went through his heart when he saw the young man fall, and would have given the world to see him restored to life. As the proof of the manner in which he looks upon all these scenes and his desire to bury all remembrances of them forever, he has had all his papers burned which related to them, that no future curiosity or industry should bring to light what he wished had never happened."

One of the few occasions on which Benton talked of the Lucas duel was in 1856, the year of the Brown-Reynolds affair. Elihu B. Washburne was in Washington as a member of Congress from Illinois. His wife was Adele Gratiot, a daughter of Henry Gratiot and Susan Hempstead. Benton was a close personal friend of the Hempsteads. Washburne was making a call upon Benton. His alliance with the Gratiot and Hempstead families prompted conversation upon the pioneer days of St. Louis. Washburne was so impressed with what Benton said that when he returned home he made a memorandum of it. Years afterwards, while on a visit to Jefferson City to present to Missouri the portrait of Edward Hempstead, who had been the first delegate in Congress, he referred to this written statement. Benton told Washburne that Hempstead would have been the first Senator from Missouri if he had lived. Hempstead received an ugly fall from his horse, and although the immediate effects did not seem serious, he was taken ill suddenly in the midst of a trial and died in a short time. Benton was with Hempstead when he died and recalled the circumstances as he talked with Washburne. Then he went on:

"Sir, how we did things in those days! After being up with my dead friend all night, I went to my office in the morning to refresh myself a little before going out to bury him five miles from town. While sitting at my table writing a man brought me a challenge to fight a duel. I told the bearer instant, 'I accept, but I must now go and bury a dead friend; that is my first duty. After that is discharged I will fight to-night, if possible; if not, to-morrow morning at daybreak. I accept your challenge, sir, and Colonel Lawless will write the acceptance and fix the terms for me.' I was outraged, sir, that the challenge should have been sent when I was burying a friend. I thought it might have been kept a few days, but when it came I was ready for it."

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Hempstead died the night of the 10th of August, 1817. Benton received the challenge the morning of the 11th. The copy preserved among the manuscript collections of the Missouri Historical Society reads:

ST. LOUIS, August 11, 1817.

THOMAS H. BENTON, ESQ.

SIR:

I am informed you applied to me on the day of the election the epithet of "puppy." If so I shall expect that satisfaction which is due from one gentleman to another for such an indignity.

I am,

CHARLES LUCAS.

Another document preserved by the Missouri Historical Society reveals the expedition with which "personal interviews" on the island were arranged in those days. Before night of that same day the terms had been arranged. At six o'clock the next morning the duel was fought in accordance with the following:

Articles regulating the terms of a personal interview between Thomas H. Benton and Charles Lucas, Esquires:

- 1.—The parties shall meet at 6 o'clock on the morning of the 12th inst., at the upper end of the island, opposite to Madame Roy's.
- 2.—Each party shall choose and provide himself with a smoothbore pistol, not exceeding eleven inches in length.
- 3.—The pistols shall be loaded on the ground by the friends of each party in the presence of both friends and parties if the latter shall require it.
- 4.—The friends of each party shall have the liberty of being armed with two loaded pistols on the ground if they please.
- 5.—The parties respectively shall be examined by the friends of each other on the ground to see that they shall have no personal defence of any kind about them, or any thing that can prevent the penetration of a ball.
- 6.—The parties previously to taking their ground shall strip off their coats and waistcoats to their shirts respectively, and shall fire in that situation.
- 7.—Each party to have leave to take a surgeon with them if they please, to the grounds.
- 8.—The parties shall stand at the distance of thirty feet, and after being asked if they are ready, and each having answered in the affirmative they shall receive the word to "Fire," after which the parties may present and fire when they please.
- 9.—The friends of the parties shall cast lots for choice of stands and for the giving of the word.
- 10.—The friends of the parties shall pledge themselves to each other that there are no persons on the island to their knowledge except those seen.
- 11.—If either party shall fire before the word "Fire" is given it shall be the duty of the friend of the opposite party to shoot him who has so fired.
- 12.—The parties by their undersigned friends pledge themselves on their honor for the strict observance of the above articles.

ST. LOUIS, 11th Aug., 1817.

LAWLESS,  
J. BARTON.

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The sending of the challenge by Lucas, the acceptance by Benton, the funeral of Hempstead, the agreement upon terms and the arrangements for the "personal interview" the next morning, all took place in one day. More than that, Lucas wrote in the evening of the same day and left for publicity this paper:

Origin of state of differences between Thomas H. Benton and Charles Lucas.

ST. LOUIS, Aug. 11, 1817, 9 o'clock at night.

The causes of differences between T. H. Benton and me were as follows: At October court of last year, Mr. Benton and I were employed on adverse sides in a cause. At the close of the evidence, he stated that the evidence being so and so he requested the court to instruct the jury to find accordingly. I stated in reply that there was no such evidence to my remembrance. He replied, "I contradict you, sir." I answered, "I contradict you, sir." He then said, "If you deny that, you deny the truth." I replied, "If you assert that, you assert what is not true." He immediately sent a challenge, which I declined accepting, for causes stated in my correspondence. The jury in a few moments returned a verdict for me, and in opposition to his statement. He never even moved for a new trial. Since that time we have had no intercourse except on business. On the day of the election at St. Louis, 4th August, 1817, I enquired whether he had paid taxes in time to entitle him to vote; he was offering his vote at the time. He applied vehement, abusive and ungentlemanly language to me, and I believe some of it behind my back, all of which he declined to recant, to give me any satisfaction other than by the greatest extremities. This is the state of the dispute between T. H. Benton and myself. I make this declaration that, let things eventuate as they may, it may be known how they originated.

CHARLES LUCAS.

The challenge, which Benton sent after the trial, Lucas declined on the ground that he had simply done his duty as a lawyer to his clients and the verdict of the jury had sustained his view of the evidence, justifying the language he had used. Lucas added: "I will not for supporting that truth be in any way bound to give the redress or satisfaction you ask for, or to any person who may feel wounded by such exposure of the truth."

Besides putting on paper the origin of the state of differences, Lucas wrote this personal note:

ST. LOUIS, August 11, 1817.

DEAR FATHER:

Embarked as I am in a hazardous enterprise, the issue of which you will know before you see this, I am under the necessity of bidding you, my brothers, sister, friends, adieu. May my brothers and sister procure to you that consolation which I cannot. I request my brothers, William and James, to pursue their studies with assiduity, preserving peace and good-will with all good men. Father, sister, brothers and friends—farewell.

CHARLES LUCAS.

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THE EXPLANATORY NARRATIVE

Inscribed upon the minute book of the Missouri Historical Society, under date of September 27th, 1887, is a contribution to the history of the Lucas-Benton duel by Richard Dowling. It contains some details not found in the published accounts. Dowling wrote:

The election, which was held on the first Monday in August, 1817, at which members of Congress were to be chosen, John Scott and Rufus Easton being the candidates and the former receiving the nomination, was known as "the military election." The United States officers stationed at Bellefontaine, then the western post, were quite active on the occasion, going through the streets with drum, fife and flag, Lieutenant Thomas F. Smith taking a conspicuous part.

The polling took place on the west side of Third, between Almond and Spruce, at the court house, the judges being inside the door, and the people coming up to vote, which they did by handing in a printed ticket, which was read aloud, each name written down at the moment, and on a line with it his vote. This was the only voting precinct for the county.

At this time a property qualification was the law. Colonel Thomas H. Benton, living in a two-story house, frame, on the north side of Washington Avenue, between Second and Third, presented himself to vote. As he handed in his ticket, his right to vote was challenged by Charles Lucas. Colonel Benton explained to the judge that he owned slaves in St. Louis, on which he paid taxes. And after this explanation offered to vote. Notwithstanding the explanation, Charles Lucas renewed his challenge. Whereupon Colonel Benton called Lucas an insolent puppy.

This was the origin of the difficulty. I had this account from the lips of Colonel Benton himself on our return from Manchester, where a large political meeting had been held, in 1842, I think. There were four in the carriage—Colonel Benton, his son, an Iowa gentleman, whose name I forget, and myself. Colonel Benton told us what I have stated.

At the meeting on the 12th of August Lucas was severely wounded. A few weeks later Benton insisted upon another exchange of shots, which resulted fatally to Lucas.

## BROWN AND REYNOLDS

Political honors and official duties came to both Brown and Reynolds after their duel. Brown distinguished himself at the following session of the legislature by the boldness of his utterances on the anti-slavery side. He was in the councils of Blair and Lyon and the other unconditional Union men before the capture of Camp Jackson at St. Louis. He was made colonel of one of the Union regiments raised at St. Louis in the spring of 1861.

Reynolds took the nomination for lieutenant-governor on the "regular" Democratic ticket in 1860 and was elected. He presided over the State Senate in the session of 1861 and shared with Governor Claiborne F. Jackson in the planning for the secession of Missouri. He published a notable letter against Federal coercion of the sovereign State of Missouri. When Jackson left Jefferson City to take Missouri into the Confederacy, Reynolds accompanied him. The convention of Union men, which met after the departure of Jackson and Reynolds and the others to join their fortunes with the South, organized a new State government. Jackson and Reynolds, moving from place to place with the State troops under Sterling Price, organized a traveling legislature and went through the forms of election of Senators and Representatives to the Confederate Congress at Richmond. Jackson died. Reynolds became the Confederate Governor of Missouri without a capital. Part of the time he marched with the army, and part of the time he was in Richmond, issuing occasional proclamations and messages.

Brown became a brigadier general. In 1863 he was made United States Senator. Before the convention of 1864 he supported the ordinance for emancipation in Missouri.

Toward the close of the war Reynolds did staff duty with General Shelby. After the war he went with Shelby and a considerable force of Missouri Confederates to Mexico and remained there several years. In 1868 he returned to St. Louis. Two years later the Liberal Republican movement was inaugurated with Brown as the nominee for governor. The platform was restoration of civil rights to Confederates. The Democrats made no nominations. Brown was elected and served the term of two years. In 1872 he was nominated for Vice-President on the Liberal Republican ticket with Horace Greeley.

While Brown's personality was of national interest, during the Presidential campaign of 1872, there appeared a graphic newspaper description of the duel with Reynolds. The authorship was attributed to John N. Edwards, who, at the time, was editor of the paper in which the article first appeared. Between Reynolds and Edwards there was close personal relationship. The two had been together in the Confederate army and had accompanied Shelby

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to Mexico. The publication was without bias for either principal. It gave some details of the duel, presumably furnished by Reynolds to Edwards, which had never before been printed. According to that account, it was quite well understood in St. Louis, during the three controversies, that Benton and Blair were sympathizing and advising with Brown.

Brown and his party went down to Selma Hall on Saturday, the 23d of August. Reynolds passed the night, before he signed the acceptance and before he was to leave the city, at the home of Isaac H. Sturgeon in the upper part of the city. He slept so soundly that Mr. Sturgeon had to call him loudly in the morning. With his party, Reynolds crossed to the Illinois side by the upper ferry. The Reynolds party reached the Illinois shore opposite Selma Hall on Monday, the 25th of August, crossed over and became the guests of G. W. Chadbourne, the lead man, who had a country home near Selma Hall.

The next morning, the 26th, two skiffs conveyed the two parties to a little island about midstream, out of jurisdiction of either State. The time was soon after sunrise. In fact, the sun was not high enough to give much advantage in the choice of position, which Kennett won for Reynolds by the toss of half a dollar. The toss also gave "the word" to Kennett. While Kennett and Mitchell settled these preliminaries, Walker and Hudson looked on and in a few words wondered if Reynolds' luck would last until the fire was delivered. The distance was twelve paces. When Kennett and Mitchell had paced it, the nearness seemed deadly. Brown and Reynolds were placed by their seconds, facing each other, at the twelve paces. The pistols were loaded in the presence of all. They were of English manufacture, with "London" engraved on the barrels and with mahogany stocks, so shaped as to give a firm grip. They had hair triggers and double sights, and they carried ounce balls. The powder was measured with care. Cartridges came at a later day. The pistols were placed in the raised hands, with the muzzles upward, for the drop shot had been named in the terms. That meant the weapons were to be held pointing upward until the word was given when they were to be lowered and fired. Every detail was arranged with scrupulous exactness by men familiar all of their lives with the code. While the weapons were being made ready the surgeons opened their cases, laid out instruments and unfolded bandages. The seconds, as soon as the pistols had been handed to the principals, stepped into their places. Kennett called out: "Gentlemen, are you ready?" "Ready," the answer came back, as if from one voice. "Fire!" cried Kennett. Presumably he finished, but nobody took note of the remaining words. Reynolds had lowered and fired instantly after the word "fire" and before the word "one." Brown had followed so quickly that there was scarcely an interval to mark two shots. But Brown was hit.

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Reynolds stood perfectly still, holding his smoking pistol. Brown changed position to relieve one leg. Hudson walked up to Reynolds and said: "I fear Brown is wounded in the groin."

"You must be mistaken," said Reynolds; "I aimed at his knee." Reynolds was correct. Brown had been shot in the right leg, the heavy ball splitting the bone near the knee joint. Brown insisted he was able to go on and demanded another fire. The surgeons took him to one side and administered temporary treatment and declared his condition would not permit of proceeding. The seconds conferred and decided that the duel must stop. They gave their decision to the principals. Reynolds walked over to where Brown was lying and offered his hand. There was a frank interchange of expressions of esteem. Kennett always insisted that Brown's shot passed close to Reynolds' breast, and that if it had not been for the rapidity of Reynolds' firing and the wound in the knee, Brown would have hit Reynolds and probably would have inflicted a fatal wound.

It became known that Reynolds had planned just what occurred. He had practised in the presence of William A. Linn, at a retired spot on the marine hospital grounds, schooling himself with the drop shot to fire with rapidity and with low aim. He had explained to Linn that his purpose was to get in the first fire and aim so that the ball might hit Brown about the knee. Linn said this was a dangerous chance in view of Brown's expertness with the pistol.

"I am sure of my quickness," Reynolds said, "and were it otherwise, I would never consent to take any man's life for a mere political quarrel. If I can disturb Brown's aim by shooting him first in the knee, it will be all I desire."

The first boat up the river after the duel was the "Editor." Brown was carried on board and placed in a stateroom. His wound was very painful. The hemorrhage was considerable. When the "Editor" reached St. Louis in the afternoon, the mayor and a squad of police were on the levee with an immense crowd drawn there by rumors of a fatal result of the meeting. When the mayor ascertained that the duel had not taken place on Missouri soil, he made no arrests. Brown was carried to his lodgings. The others scattered. St. Louis talked that day and the next of nothing but the duel.

John N. Edwards had occasion to put in practice what he learned of the code from his friend Reynolds. Late in the decade, 1870-80, an editorial controversy occurred between the *St. Louis Times* and the *St. Louis Journal*. The editor of the latter was Emory S. Foster. Edwards was editor of the *Times*. The managers of a county fair on the northern border of Illinois conceived the enterprising idea that the presence of Jefferson Davis would be a drawing card. They extended the invitation and made public their action. The press of the country commented vigorously. Davis declined the invita-

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tion. The ex-Confederate editor of the *Times* and the ex-Federal editor of the *Journal* kept up the fire. On one side it was intimated that Davis' declination was probably just as well, as it might have been embarrassing to have the ex-President of the Confederacy discover in the North some of the silverware carried home by returning Union soldiers. Foster denounced the insinuation in words that reflected upon the editor of the *Times*. Edwards challenged. Foster accepted and chose for the place of meeting Winnebago County, the Illinois locality where the invitation to Davis had been extended. And to Winnebago County the principals journeyed, attended by Morrison Munford and P. S. O'Reilly for Edwards and by Harrison Branch and W. D. W. Barnard for Foster. The party reached the appointed locality, drove out into the country a few miles and exchanged shots. The duel was bloodless. The dignity of Illinois was outraged and for some time there was much talk of prosecution under the anti-duelling statute, but it died down.

In 1874 Reynolds, with his civil rights restored through the movement headed by Brown, was elected to the Missouri legislature. During the administration of President Arthur he was appointed the Democratic member of a commission sent to investigate commercial relations between the United States and the Central and South American countries.

Brown and Reynolds were on friendly terms after the war. From having been as far apart politically as was possible, they came to have common political purposes. During the last few years of their lives their professional work was much the same. They performed such duties as masters in chancery, commissioners and referees.

Brown and Reynolds gave the best of their years and talents to politics. When age came on, neither felt that his career had yielded a satisfying degree of success. Brown thought he should have devoted himself to mathematics. His natural bent was in that direction. A treatise on algebra, which he wrote, attracted much notice. "Governor Brown," said Enos Clarke, who knew him long and intimately, "should have been a college professor. He would have done honor to a chair of mathematics at Harvard or Yale."

Reynolds was a man of much sentiment. At the time of the death of his first wife he wrote a biographical sketch, had it printed on black bordered pages and sent copies to intimate friends. Reynolds was a linguist. He was gifted with natural aptitude for learning languages. In some of his earlier political campaigns, during the high tide of German immigration to St. Louis, he made many speeches in German. William E. Curtis, the traveler and writer, who was one of his colleagues, tells of the surprise which Reynolds occasioned as the commission to investigate commercial relations with Central and South American countries went from capital to capital. Reynolds was chosen frequently by his colleagues to respond to addresses of welcome. He

would speak first in the language of the country where the commission was being received, and then translate his address into other languages until everybody present understood him. He spoke other languages apparently with the readiness he did his own.

In the spring of 1887, Reynolds went to the Federal building ostensibly on legal business. He was found at the bottom of an elevator shaft. A short time before his death he wrote: "I am troubled with insomnia and frequent nervousness. I suffer from persistent melancholy. My mind is beginning to wander. I have hallucinations and even visions, when I am awake, of materialized spirits of deceased ancestors, urging me to join them in another world. Life has become a burden to me. I am now still sound of mind and I write down this statement so that should I do anything rash, my friends may feel assured it was done in some temporary disorder of the mind. In that event I commend myself to the mercy of God and the charitable judgment of men, soliciting for my excellent and devoted wife the sympathy of my friends."











